

Bandwagon

THE JOURNAL OF
THE CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

January-February 1990



BANDWAGON

THE JOURNAL OF
THE CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Vol. 34, No. 1

January-February 1990

FRED D. PFENING, JR., EDITOR

Fred D. Pfening III, Managing Editor-Bill Biggerstaff, Production and Graphics

Joseph T. Bradbury, Associate Editor

BANDWAGON, The Journal of the Circus Historical Society (USPS 406-390) (ISSN 0005 4968), is published bi-monthly. Second class postage paid at Columbus, OH. Editorial, advertising and circulation office is located at 2515 Dorset Rd., Columbus, OH 43221. Phone (614) 294-5361. Advertising rates are: Full page \$95.00, half page \$55.00, quarter page \$35.00. Minimum ad is \$20.00. The BANDWAGON is produced using a Macintosh IIcx computer, ReadySetGo 4.5 and LetraStudio software.

Subscription rates, \$17.00 to members and non-members in the United States, \$19.00 per year outside the United States. Single copies \$3.00 plus \$1.00 postage. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to BANDWAGON, 1075 West Fifth Ave., Columbus, OH 43212.

Offices of the Circus Historical Society are located at 1030 Chestnut Blvd., Chesterton, IN 46304.

CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY-John F. Polacek, President, 5980 Lannoo, Detroit, MI 48236; Fred Dahlinger, Jr., Vice President, 1030 Chestnut St, Chesterton, IN 46304; Mrs. Johann W. Dahlinger, Secretary-Treasurer, 1030 Chestnut Blvd., Chesterton, IN 46304.

DIRECTORS: Div. 1-Fred D. Pfening, Jr., 2515 Dorset Rd., Columbus, OH 43221 (Ohio-Mich.-Ind.); Div. 2-Copeland MacAllister, 30 Salem End Rd., #2A, Framingham, MA 01701 (N.H.-Maine-Vt.-Mass.-Ct.-Del.-R.I.); Div. 3-William L. Rhodes, 2528 Taylorsville Rd., Louisville, KY 40205 (N.Y.-N.J.-Pa.-Md.-D.C.-Va.-W. Va.-Ky.); Div. 4-Joseph T. Bradbury, 1453 Ashwoody Ct., N.E., Atlanta, GA 30319 (N.C.-S.C.-Ga.-Ala.-Fla.-Miss.-Tenn.-Ark.-La.); Div. 5-Robert Parkinson, 101 Litchfield La., Baraboo, WI 53913 (Wis.-Ill.-Minn.-Iowa-Mo.); Div. 6-Orin C. King, 5225 SW 20 Terrace #302, Topeka, KS 66604 (N.D.-S.D.-Kan.-Neb.-Okla.-Tex.); Div. 7-Joseph S. Rettinger, P.O. Box 20371, Phoenix, AZ 85036 (Col.-Mont.-Ida.-Wyo.-N.M.-Utah-Nev.-Ariz.); Div. 8-Michael D. Sporrer, 14537 N.E. 40th St. #H202, Bellevue, WA 98007 (Wa.-Ore.-Ca.-Hawaii); Div. 9-Dr. Gordon D. Brown, 7459 Saskatchewan Dr., Edmonton, Alb., Can. 76G-2A5 (All countries outside the United States.)

THIS MONTH'S COVER

From 1935 until 1950 Cole Bros. Circus was the second largest circus on tour. It is difficult realize that this wonderful railroad show has been off the road for forty years.

In 1946 the show traveled on fifteen flats, five stock cars and nine sleepers. The twelfth city on the route was Indianapolis, Indiana, a four day stand where the cover photo was taken on May 3.

Arthur Hoffman, side show manager, is shown making an opening to a packed midway before the matinee.

The photo was taken by Harry A. Atwell and is from the Pfening Archives.

NEW MEMBERS

Jerry Hogan 3547
9 F St.
South Boston, MA 02127

Norman F. Waltrick 3548
412 Commerce St.
Chambersburg, PA 17201

Bonnie Kernan 3549
641 South Owl Dr.
Sarasota, FL 33598

Judith C. Nelson 3550
7690 Torrem St.
La Mesa, CA 92042

Charles P. Dalrymple 3551
435 Dogwood Terrace
Easton, PA 18042

Mark Renfro 3552
4755 Winesanker Way
Ft. Worth, TX 76133

Lola Riveras 3553
226 Boston St. #2
Dorchester, MA 02125

Thierry Comes 3554
Circus Knie
9640 Rapperswil, Switzerland

Alex K. Vetengl 3555
4128 N. Clarendon #211
Chicago, IL 60613

Francis Machu 3556
33, Avenue Albert Petit
92220 Bagneux, France

Terri Moyers 3557
#59 Encantado Loop
Santa Fe, NM 97505

Jim & Susan Nordmarck 3558
7480 Howard Creek Rd.
Sarasota, FL 34241

JoAnn Wilson 3559
c/o International All-Star Circus
P. O. Drawer 49708
Sarasota, FL 34230

Dennis Hyde 3560
207 Lee Ave.
Horseheads, NY 14845

Robert E. Robinson 3561
P. O. Box 397
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

P. Nonnemaker 3562
7222 Wallace
Kansas City, MO 64133

Len Jenkin 3563
1 Washington Square Village #9B
New York, NY 10012

Gunnar A. Berg 3564
4 Slojdgatan
75238 Uppsala, Sweden

Glenn C. Goggin 3565
5307 Macwood Dr.
Woodbridge, VA 22193

Walter R. Graybeal 3566
806 W. Grove St.
Bloomington, IL 61701

John S. Lloyd 3567
3520 Spring Rd.
Oak Brook, IL 60521

Richard W. Campbell 3568
9601 Cecilwood Dr.
Santee, CA 92071-1426

Kevin T. Hart 3569
P. O. Box 268
Corbin, KY 40702

AVAILABLE BACK ISSUES OF BANDWAGON

1966-Jan.-Feb.
1967-July-Aug., Sept.-Oct., Nov.-
Dec.
1968-All but Jan.-Feb.
1969-Jan.-Feb., July-Aug., Sept.-Oct.
1970-All but July-Aug., Sept.-Oct.
1971-All but May-June.
1972-All available.
1973-All but Nov.-Dec.
1974-1975-All available.
1976-All but Jan.-Feb., Nov.-Dec.
1977-All but Mar.-Ap.
1978-to date All available.

Price is now \$3.00 each.

Add \$1.00 postage one issue,
\$2.00 more than one issue.
Please select substitutes in case
we are out of any of above.

BANDWAGON BACK ISSUES
2515 DORSET RD.
COLUMBUS, OH 43221

Richard J. Keller P. O. Box 1162 Gibsonton, FL 33534	3570	Joseph McKennon Division 5: Robert Parkinson Division 6: Orin C. King Division 7: Joseph S. Rettinger Division 8: Michael Sporrer Division 9: Gordon D. Brown	1 2 7 15 11 2	NEW BANDWAGON LOOK
William D. Carlson 721 Big Bend Dr. Pacifica, CA 94044	3571	Respectfully submitted, Stuart Thayer, January 25, 1990		As you look through this issue of <i>Bandwagon</i> it may look a little different to you. The magazine has been redesigned for the 1990s. Changes include a new logo for the cover and the masthead. The new page layout has a different headline treatment and wider columns with a new text type face called Palatino. This text face is easier to read. The headlines are in Gorilla, a down loaded PostScript face that is rather circusey.
Albert G. Hallowell 5010 Trenton Dr. Tyler, TX 75703	3572			This is the first issue to be composed on a new Macintosh IIcx, which is much faster and provides twice the memory of the Macintosh SE that had been used since the <i>Bandwagon</i> went to desktop publishing in 1987.
Ronald G. Gore Box R White Springs, FL 32096	3573	1990 CHS CONVENTION		
Paul E. Hoffman Route 1, Box 11 Merrimac, WI 53561	3574	Plans are set for the 1990 Circus Historical Society convention to be held in Ann Arbor, Michigan June 21 to 23. It has been more than three decades since the Great Lakes State has hosted a CHS convention. The last one was held in Lansing, Michigan in 1957.		
Raymond Robinson 105 Ridge Ave. Neptune, NJ 07753	3575	The three days will include historical presentations, a circusiana auction, special features, the Kelly-Miller Circus, and the banquet.		
REINSTATED MEMBERS		Pre-show activities will begin on Wednesday night June 20 with registration and films. Festivities will start early the next morning with a full day to explore the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village in nearby Dearborn. As a part of the day's adventure there will be an opportunity to view the circus posters that are part of the holdings of the Edison Institute which is also on the grounds. After a full day outdoors the evening sessions will involve historical papers. Afterwards night owls will have the opportunity to watch movies, or go a mile to the lot where the Kelly-Miller show will be making a night move into town.		BILL GREEN DIES
Eugene B. Tomlinson, Jr. P. O. Box 10636 Southport, NC 28461	607	The next day will be an early morning setup, a parade through the streets of Ann Arbor, followed by papers, the auction, the circus and the banquet.		Bill Green CHS No. 9, one of two surviving charter members of the Circus Historical Society, passed away in Beatrice, Nebraska on January 15, 1990 at age 80. Bill had been named a lifetime honorary member at the 1989 CHS convention.
Robert J. Miefert 1719 Springdale Rd. Cincinnati, OH 45231	1032	The convention committee has already contracted with the Ramada Inn--a brand new one-to be the official convention headquarters. They have promised the rate of \$69.00 per room for one to four people. A registration card for the convention will be in a forthcoming issue of <i>Bandwagon</i> . It is important that you make a decision as to your room as soon as possible. That same weekend there is a major motor car race in the area and the vast majority of rooms are already booked. We have a block of rooms set aside, and hopefully we will all find lodging.		For the last ten years Green had been in a nursing home in Beatrice. One of his greatest joys was reading the <i>Bandwagon</i> .
Arthur P. Gunther 378 W. Mountain Rd. W. Simsbury, CT 06092	48	In the meantime, those wishing to give historical papers should contact John Polacsek, 5980 Lannoo, Detroit, Michigan 48236 to assure being scheduled. More details will appear in the March-April <i>Bandwagon</i> . Plan to attend the many and varied circus activities that will be part of another wonderful Circus Historical Society convention.		He had operated a print shop in Washington, Kansas. For a number of years in the 1940s he published <i>The Call of the Calliope</i> , a small circus publication.
Marvin Gauger 915 Second St. Baraboo, WI 54913	219			During his lifetime Green visited shows playing Kansas and photographed them all. He was well known to high grass circus owners.
William R. Kohse 1845 Ocean Dr. McKinleyville, CA 9552	3292			Some years ago he donated his circus collection and circus negatives to the Circus World Museum.
Jerome Schaub 1722 Leolyn St. Pittsburgh, PA 15210	2306			
Edward C. Streeter 496 LaGuardia Pl. New York, NY 10012	3128			
1989 CHS ELECTION RESULTS				CORRECTION
President: John Polacsek Fred D. Pfening III	180 1			A photo was misidentified in the Biller Bros. article in the November-December 1989 issue. The performers in the photo at the top of page 55 are actually Mr. and Mrs. Reynosa and her brother, not the Navarro brothers as listed in the outline. Reader Jack Looney, a clown with Biller, called it to our attention.
Vice-President: Fred Dahlinger Secretary-Treasurer: Johann W. Dahlinger	176 180			
Directors: Division 1: Fred D. Pfening, Jr. Division 2: Copeland MacAllister Division 3: Bill Rhodes Jim Harshman Division 4: Joseph T. Bradbury	27 22 36 1 20			DOROTHY HERBERT MOVIE AVAILABLE
				The Republic Pictures serial <i>The Mysterious Doctor Satan</i> made in 1939 is available on video tape. Dorothy Herbert appears in this film.
				All fifteen episodes on two VHS cassettes can be purchased at Blockbuster Video outlets for \$29.95.

1989 SEASON

The Circus Year In Review

By Fred D. Pfening III

The successful 1989 season concluded a memorable decade which was arguably the industry's best financially since the 1920s. No major circuses folded, many troupes improved in quality and physical size, and a number of new shows entered the business, some of which became major players. Most prospered throughout the period. All this occurred against the backdrop of the longest peacetime economic boom in the nation's history, a necessity for success in virtually any commercial endeavor.

It was also the most creative period for the industry since at least the 1940s when John Ringling North imported New York's intelligentsia to revamp Ringling-Barnum. Big Apple was perhaps the decade's most innovative company, exploiting the potential of the one ring environment in a brilliant manner. Melding elements of musical theater, modern dance, mime, and street performance with traditional circus forms, it was the triumph of quality over quantity. Other "new wave" shows, such as Circus Flora, owed an artistic debt to Big Apple's path breaking showmanship. A few shows, particularly Circo Tihany and Cirque du Soleil, took Big Apple's theatrical concepts so much further that some observers hesitated calling them circuses. The Moscow Circus further enriched the field by presenting fabulously produced and technically superb acts. Another innovator was the Pickle Family Circus which stretched comedic forms with lengthy, choreographed clown routines.

The fuel that powered most of these engines of innovation was, of all things, the not-for-profit corporate structure which allowed Big Apple, Pickle, Soleil, Flora,

and a few other shows to receive grants and contributions, and avoid income taxes. Thus freed from dependency on box office receipts for operating expenses, they were able to take artistic risks and add frills which would be difficult or impossi-

Animal rights protesters were a common sight at virtually all circuses carrying animals. The sign says: "Animals are not ours to exploit in entertainment. Boycott the Circus!!!" Photo taken on Kelly-Miller at Columbus, Ohio on May 16. Fred Pfening Jr. photo.



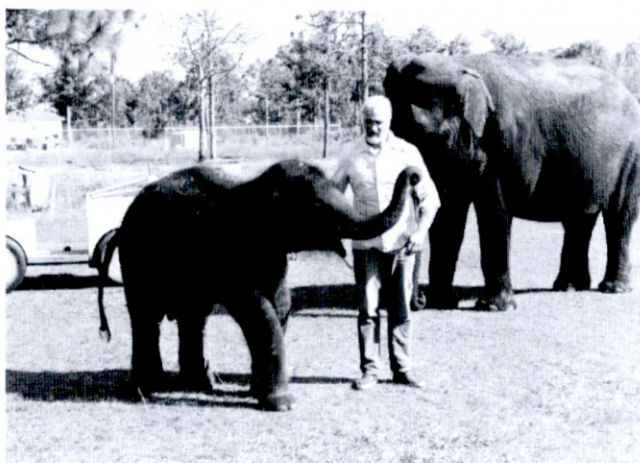
ble for private sector shows. About 25% of Big Apple's revenue, for example, came from gifts and grants. This created some controversy in the industry as showmen operating in a traditional free market economy complained that it was unfair to compete against companies which had fiscal advantages not available to them. In any event, the bottom line on the non-for-profits was that they were perhaps the first circuses since 1793 to have the financial and aesthetic luxury of being able to place art above commerce.

These shows were reviewed by big city newspapers whose critics took the performances seriously and judged them by the same standards as theatrical productions. Most writers viewed the shows as a legitimate segment of the performing arts, often praising them in terms usually reserved for Broadway hits. These circuses broke new ground in that they appealed to sophisticated adults as well as children, reversing a long trend in which circuses had become more and more entertainment for children.

One of the most significant results of the rise of the "new wave" circuses was their creation of a new audience. Many fanatical devotees of the Big Apple Circus or Cirque du Soleil were disinterested in Ringling-Barnum or Beatty-Cole. The theatricality, polish, and energy of these shows had a great appeal to young affluent, urban professionals which was graphically pointed out in a Cirque du Soleil survey which indicated that half their audience was between the ages of 25 and 44, that 85% of them had at least a college de-

gree, and that over a third of them had a family income of over \$75,000. These clearly weren't the people who attended Carson and Barnes.

Only time will tell if these new shows will have further impact on the industry or will be seen in retrospect as simply interesting aberrations. One point, however, was clear. Big Apple, Cirque du Soleil, and their brethren added a new vitality to the business by testing new forms and formats and reviving old ones. Perhaps even more important in the long run, Big Apple, Soleil and Flora all operated circus schools which imparted their philosophies to students who will presumably take those les-



Buckles Woodcock tutoring Baby Ned at Woodcock's Ruskin, Florida home in February. Baby Ned began his career on Royal Hanneford, and was the star of the summer edition of Big Apple. John Polacsek photo.

sons and values into the rings of any number of American circuses for years to come.

While the vast majority of the year's news was positive, the industry saw increased activity by animal rights groups culminating a decade of lobbying and circus bashing. Efforts to influence legislation restricting and regulating the exhibition of certain animals continued to be a challenge to the business. Protesters were a common sight in front of arenas and big tops. An organization called People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals passed out leaflets at performances which read "The Circus is the Cruellest Show on Earth," and "Make this your last circus." *The Animals' Agenda*, an animal rights journal, devoted ten pages to detailing what it perceived as the cruel and inhumane treatment circus animals received. Some pessimistic trainers felt it was just a matter of time before all animal acts were banned outright. This problem won't be going away, and will likely be the business' biggest threat in the 1990s.

The other major challenge facing the industry was criticism of and legislation limiting phone promotion, particularly in cases where the sponsored received a small percentage of the money raised. Many articles appeared in mass circulation magazines and newspapers during the year warning of the evils of

phone rooms. Connie Chung even had a segment on phone solicitation on her television show, a sure sign that the issue had captured popular interest. Like the animal rights issue, this problem is sure to continue.

The Big Apple Circus, the most widely known of the "new wave" troupes opened its summer season in mid-April with almost a month in Boston. Dates in New York City and its suburbs followed through late

June when the show moved to New Haven for about a week. Two Long Island engagements were next, after which came appearances in Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Vermont where the summer tour ended on August 6 at Shelburne. The display in the ring was for the most part a repeat of the 1988 Christmas show which featured Chinese acts. New additions were Pedro Reis, a former member of the Survivors who appeared on Ringling-Barnum in the mid-1980s, doing a cloud swing; and the infant elephant Baby Ned, presented by Ben Williams. Missing from the roster was Jeff Gordon, long-time Big Apple clown who appeared on Broadway in the smash Bill Irwin review *Largely New York*.

The hugely popular winter run at Lincoln Center in the heart of Manhattan started on October 26 and ended on January 7. The wild west theme featured Barry Lubin as Grandma the clown who returned to the organization after an ab-

Cirque du Soleil on the beach at Santa Monica, California in September. Jerry Cash photo.



Balancers Amelie Demay and Eric Varelles during a Cirque du Soleil performance in Chicago in June. Sheelagh Jones photo.

sence of a couple of years. The performance was a fascinating mix of customarcircus and wild west show acts combined with music hall attractions, twists on ancient acts, and terrific clowning. It was well balanced, fast paced, noisy, colorful and loud, successfully modulating all the emotions which the circus evokes into a highly pleasing production. Among the more traditional numbers were Benny Williams and Anna May the elephant, Reis' cloud swing, David Rosaire and his dogs, the Loyal-Suarez riders featuring Timi Loyal, Vince Bruce's trick roping, and the Rios brothers in a superb risley act. Katja Schumann did the Courier of St. Petersburg made up as a pony express rider, an exciting variation of the classic act created by Andrew Ducrow over a century and a half ago. Another throwback to earlier days was a stationary bar casting act, a routine rarely seen in recent years. Cesar Aedo completed the equation with an eccentric comedy pantomime act.

Going to the Lincoln Center performance under the heated tent became a Christmas tradition for New Yorkers as most performances were sell outs. The rich and famous came out in droves, and the show generally was perceived



Circo Tihany on the lot in Houston. Bill Whitney photo.

Magical Circus
First Time In America!

TIHANY

LAST 3 DAYS

NEXT TO BAYSIDE
NORTH END, DOWNTOWN MIAMI

MIAMI (305) 371-2740
TEL (305) 358-5885

SHOWTIMES:
Sat. 12:30, 3:30 & 7:30 pm
Sun. 12:30, 3:30 & 4:30 pm
Fri. 4:30 & 8:00 pm

FREE (\$4.00 Value)
Bring this ad to the Circus Gate for a FREE Child's (11 & under) general admission!
FREE KID'S COUPONS AT ALL SEDANO'S SUPERMARKETS

A PHENOMENAL EXPERIENCE
...A SHOW NOT TO BE MISSED...
—FAMED ILLUSIONIST David Copperfield

TICKETS ON SALE AT:
Bayside Marketplace, Circus Box Office
and through **FOCUS THEATRE**
AT 9 RECORDS SOUND WAREHOUSE, COCONUTS WEST
COAST VIDEO, SELECT ECKING STORES

Tihany newspaper ad during Miami engagement. Arnold Brito collection.

as the equal of modern dance or musical theater. Paul Binder, the troupe's founder, received perhaps the ultimate accolade of sophistication when he was profiled in a Dewar's Scotch ad.

Cirque du Soleil was the most theatrical, least traditional show on tour. The performance followed a story line and each act blended into the next without announcements. Founder Guy Laliberte stated: "We think of what we do as being close to a musical," and indeed it was much like watching a Broadway show with a circus theme. Although juggling, hand balancing, tight rope walking, teeterboard, trapeze and other traditional skills were part of the production, they were presented in such a manner that the overall effect was a radical departure from customary methods of presentation. The costumes, lighting and music were



Wardrobe trucks at the back door of Circo Tihany in Miami in November. Arnold Brito photo.

superb, far more imaginative than anything else under a tent. The show carried no animals and was in fact critical of those that did. The program didn't have the usual listing of acts, and the display stressed the wildly clever production more than technical virtuosity. The vast majority of performers and other personnel had never earned a paycheck from another North American circus. And in what was probably a circus first it gave a benefit performance in San Francisco to help the Pickle Family Circus. This wasn't your father's Oldsmobile.

The show's m. o. was to play long stands in large metropolitan areas. It opened in Miami in April, and then moved to Chicago for a May and June run. After a July engagement near Quebec City, it made a Vargas-like jump to San Francisco where it appeared in August and September. The repeat stand on the beach at Santa Monica began on September 20 followed by the show's first appearance in Phoenix which concluded the season. The troupe was immensely popular with its upscale, urban audience which often gave it standing ovations. This was hardly the circus for the masses as the top

ticket in Chicago was \$35 which must have been an all-time high.

The Moscow Circus became an important factor in the industry in 1989, putting two troupes on the road. While they were not differentiated by colors as were many other two troupe organizations, that didn't stop one wag from referring to the two shows as the red and red units. One outfit started its itinerary in Toronto in August at the Canadian National Exposition where the show made its only under

canvas date in a one ring tent seating 4200. Eight other stands in major Canadian cities followed before the American leg of the tour began at Milwaukee on November 1. A cross country route of metropolitan centers was scheduled to conclude in Richfield, Ohio in mid-May 1990. A highlight of the 41



Some of the Tihany rolling stock in Miami prior to set up. Arnold Brito photo.

week run was the early 1990 appearance at Radio City Music Hall in Manhattan.

In contrast to the other newer circuses, this one adhered to the traditional format of simply presenting one act after another without any production numbers. The lighting, music, and costumes were nothing special, and at some venues, Radio City Music Hall for example, the audience suffered from the performance being on a stage rather than being viewed in the round. What separated the Moscow Circus from most of its American competition was not its showmanship but the extremely high technical proficiency of the acts. The bear, tiger and juggling acts were all first class. Audiences were also treated to horseback juggler, a routine popular in the 19th century but rarely seen on this continent today. Three numbers were exceptional: the Doveyko teeterboard act which won a Gold Clown

award at Monte Carlo a few years ago, the Tamerlan Nugzarov cossack riders, and the Alexander Hertz flyers. In the latter's finale an aerialist was propelled about 50 feet in the air from a swinging stand to the arms of the catcher hanging from another swing. It was one of the most dramatic single tricks ever seen in a circus ring, and received standing ovations.

The second unit, also known as the Crane unit, opened in Houston in late November, and was scheduled to closed in Atlantic City in September 1990 with most engagements in the West, Southwest, and South. While most of the appearances were indoors, some dates were scheduled under canvas. Many of the acts had been on the 1988-1989 American tour including the Flying Cranes which were a sensation the previous year.

The Moscow Circus was the brainchild of Steven Leber, a former rock and roll and theatrical promoter whose intention was to make the show a permanent part of the North American circus landscape. His five year agreement with Soviet circus authorities to produce the show also set up a joint Soviet-American group to control the importation of acts. The show was a challenge to the Ringling-Barnum organization which cancelled an engagement at Milwaukee's Bradley Center after the Moscow Circus was booked. Leber vowed to fight the exclusivity clause in many Ringling arena contracts, and noted in a December *Amusement Business* interview that since he controlled the flow of Soviet talent, he could prevent Ringling-Barnum from signing a Russian act.

Circus Tihany, which billed itself as "The Circus of the Future," made its first North American tour after many successful years in South America. The show was a combination of circus, Broadway, and Las Vegas mixed together in about a half a dozen specs which led into acts. The extravagant production numbers, which included much dancing, formed the core of the performance. Routines included a dog number, a single elephant act, bareback riding, living statues, and lots of magic. In one routine, owner Franz Czeisler performed illusions after being driven onstage in a Rolls Royce. The cat, chimp and seal acts were held up at the Mexican border and scratched from the bill. The use of taped rather than live music was an oddity for such a lavish show.

The company's logistics were unique. Two tents were hopped because of the length of time needed to set up the giant Canobbio big top which held 3800. The audience sat theater style facing the end of the tent where the performance was given on a 140 wide elevated stage. Wardrobe trucks jutted out the back end of the tent behind the stage which al-

lowed the performers to stay in the tent to make the many costume changes. The equipment was hauled in 28 show owned semis.

After about six months in Mexico, the show opened in Houston on September 29, appearing there until October 9. It then jumped to New Orleans where it played seventeen days. A month in Miami fol-

lowed. Reports were that Tihany planned to go to the West Coast in 1990, meaning that Americans would have another opportunity to see this unique production.

Circus Flora, headed by David Balding, continued the epic of the Baldini family. In the previous two seasons the production charted the adventures of this fictional Italian circus family in early 19th century America, using the acts to advance the story line. This year's installment, called "Back to the Bayou," continued the saga by telling the story of the family's journey from St. Louis to New Orleans via riverboat. It was a unique concept in which the unifying theme of the program, the lives of the struggling Baldini family, was not only carried through the entire production, but from year to year. Acts included the Hentoff and Hoyer trapeze duo, the Flying Wallendas, and Larry Pisoni. Most of the organization's energies were directed toward the circus school it operated in St. Louis. As a result the troupe had only one date in St. Louis in late summer.

The Pickle Family Circus, the oldest and the smallest of the new wave shows, opened its fifteenth tour in California in April and appeared along the west coast most of the year, although it made a cross country jump to New York in July. The season ended with the annual appearance at the Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco in December. Most dates were sidewalled, while the show continued to raise funds for a tent.

This troupe adhered to an intimate one ring format. The first half of the exhibition featured acts inspired by myths and folk tales. In one routine, for example, the Pandora of legend opened her infamous box to unleash the world's first juggler. The second part of the show was a fast paced presentation called Cafe Chaotique which featured a buffet of clowning and juggling, both Pickle Family trademarks, all tied together in a story about a Paris restaurant. The ringmistress and star of the show was Queenie Moon the clown, aka Joan Mankin, an egotistical Raggedy Ann character. Strange productions and personas like this, far from the mainstream of American circus, made the show a cult favorite to its audiences.

Indeed, the organization exuded a charming irreverence and self deprecation. It excluded dare devil routines, and carried no trained animals thus limiting itself to the circus's many comic elements. What other circus called its 1989 route the "Rubber Wheels" tour, parodying the Rolling Stones concurrent "Steel Wheels" tour, or whose motto was "If you only got one life to live, why not live it as a clown," or organized a treasure hunt as a fund raising vehicle?

The established, conventional segments

DELAND BREAKFAST ROTARY CLUB
Presents:
DeLand's Own Circus!

UNDER THE BIG TOP
CLYDE BEATTY-COLE BROS.
WORLD'S LARGEST
CIRCUS

3 RING

ALL NEW FOR '89

TODAY And Thursday
AIRPORT SHOWGROUNDS
Rt. 92/DeLand

SHOWTIMES:
Wed....8 p.m. Only
Thur....4:30 p.m. and 8 p.m.

Be The First To See The
Circus Under Our
"NEW" Giant Big Top.

ELEPHANT RIDES ON THE MIDWAY 1 HOUR BEFORE SHOWTIME!

TICKET PRICES: GENERAL ADMISSION
ADULTS (Age 13 to 64).....\$8.00
CHILDREN (Age 12 & under).....\$4.00
SENIOR CITIZENS (Age 65 +).....\$4.00
RESERVED CHAIR SEATS.....\$1.00 Additional

★ Tickets On Sale At ★
Circus Ticket Wagon On The Midway
10 a.m. Until Showtime

Newspaper ad for Beatty-Cole opening in DeLand, Florida in late March. Leroy Sweetland collection.

lowed starting on November 3 after which it moved to West Palm Beach where it closed in mid-December. A planned late December appearance in Puerto Rico was cancelled.

Accounts indicated that while Houston gave the show good business, the rest of the dates were terrible. The New Orleans stand was particularly bad as Tihany played there after the Ringling blue unit, the Beatty show, and the Shrine Circus. Observers also noted that seventeen days were simply too many for a metropolitan area the size of the Crescent City. The experience proved that no matter how good the program any circus must use sound business and marketing methods to suc-



Beatty-Cole gave a traditional performance with three rings of elephants. Leroy Sweetland photo.

of the fraternity operated almost as if they existed in a separate universe from the "new wave" shows in that they generally played smaller population centers and rarely offered opposition in the major metropolitan centers in which the newer shows thrived. Nor did they take artistic and financial risks like the non-profits, opting to stay with tried and true formulas. For the most part they were not influenced by the newer circus' innovations. It was almost as if two tiers of the business existed, playing in different areas to different audiences. Nevertheless, the traditional tented circus had another good season, and dished out lots of pageantry and excitement to that part of America which wasn't located on the ocean.

The Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros. Circus, owned by John Pugh and Doug Holwadel, opened in its home town of DeLand, Florida on March 29. Following its usual pattern, the show headed up the eastern seaboard, reaching the mid-Atlantic states in May. It was in New England from early June until mid-July when it started a long stretch in New York and New Jersey. By September the southward trek had begun, taking the aggregation through the deep South through late October. Most of November was spent in Florida where it closed late in the month. The thirty-five week season put a little over 9000 miles on the odometers.

By all reports the show came home a winner despite some rough weather early in the year. It played 5 one day stands, 52 two day stands, 34 three day stands, and 4 four day stands, a reflection of management policy to play population centers and to minimize the number of jumps. The July 17-19 Queens, New York date was notable as it was the first time the show had played New York City since

1958. Business in the big city was excellent and the circus received a write up in the *New York Times*.

The performance included a number of new acts including the Bautista family with a perch pole and teeterboard act, John Welde's bears, aerialists Ron and Mitzi Gill, and Mark Lotz with a death defying single trapeze act. Returning

New equipment included a workingman's sleeper, a new office trailer, six GMC Brigadier tractors, new lights, and a 4 pole bale ring type, vinyl big top from Anchor which was used once in 1988. The tent was the first made out of vinyl for Beatty-Cole which made 1989 something of a landmark as the first season no large show used a canvas big top.

Beatty-Cole displayed a sense of history in naming its subsidiary corporations. The concession company was called King Bros. Circus; the wardrobe business, Sells and Gray; and best of all, the in-house advertising agency was called Butler, Fellows and Braden, after three geniuses in the field.

Carson and Barnes Circus, headed by the venerable D. R. Miller, followed its traditional formula of playing small to medium sized towns, usually in rural areas, which resulted in another successful season despite bad weather at many dates. It opened at Paris, Texas on March 23, and con-



The Carson and Barnes canvas truck at Hilliard, Ohio in September. Fred D. Pfening Jr. photo.

performers included Josip Marcan and his cat act, Fred Logan and the elephants, the Trevor Bale liberty horses, and the Arturo Gaona flying trapeze troupe. As in past years Jimmy James was the ringmaster and James Haverstrom was the band leader.

Lotz, who had been in the Survivors group on Ringling-Barnum a few years ago, had a tough season. In the spring he fell from his motorcycle on the inclined wire but was not seriously injured. On July 19 he fell during his trapeze act, but returned to the show in a few days. On August 14 in Monticello, New York his luck ran out as he took a bad tumble that shattered the bones in his ankles and feet. When he rejoined the show two weeks later he was wheel chair bound with both feet in casts from his toes to his calves. The Tangier Troupe of Arab acrobats replaced him in the performance.



Carson and Barnes carried a first class open air menagerie which included the biggest elephant herd on the road, shown here on May 15 at Carpinteria, California. Jerry Cash photo.

tinued in the Lone Star state through late April when the show headed west through New Mexico and Arizona, reaching California on May 1. After spending virtually all of May in the Golden State, the troupe appeared in the mountain, plains, and Midwest states through early September. The trek back home to Hugo, Oklahoma took the organization through the border states, and the deep South before ending the season at Clarksville, Tex-

as on November 12. Over 16,000 miles were covered by each of the 42 company owned steering wheels.

Carson and Barnes was the last of the big tent shows to move every night. Only 2 two-day and 1 three-day stands were played during the entire season which took the troupe through twenty states. It spent the most time in Texas, 30 days, followed by California where it appeared 29 days.

The show played to the largest crowds in its history at San Juan Capistrano, California on May 6. On Memorial Day it had three inches of snow in Susanville, California. In Allen Texas in late March the show appeared under the blue sky as high tension lines above the lot precluded the tent's use. The show was in the Milwaukee suburbs the two days before the Great Circus Parade.

New equipment included five new tractors, an office wagon, and a combination cookhouse and pie car. Upholding its reputation as a traveling zoo, the show carried 23 elephants, 8 exotic cats, 32 horses and ponies, lots of lead stock, a white rhinoceros, a pigmy hippo and a giraffe. The latter died on October 18 in Vicksburg, Mississippi. Missing from the animal inventory was MacDermott the moose who died before the season began.

The five ring performance was similar to the previous year's. It included veteran Pat White and the lions and tigers, the Loyal-Repensky riders, Donnie Carr and the elephants, and three flying acts, the Flying Ybarras, the Flying Verttis, and the Flying Rodogels. The spec was called the "Roaring Twenties," and the music was taped.

Jim Judkins edited the show's route book, 1989's only example of that time-honored art form. As in the past, the book was full of information and sly, show-smart observations concerning the state of the nation's circus goers. Along with its predecessors, it will undoubtedly be an essential document for those wishing to understand the circus business a hundred years hence.

Circus Vargas had by far the most difficult season of the three big tenters. It experienced a reshuffling of its performance, mixed results at the ticket wagon, and most traumatic of all, the early September death of its founder, owner, and leader, Clifford E. Vargas.

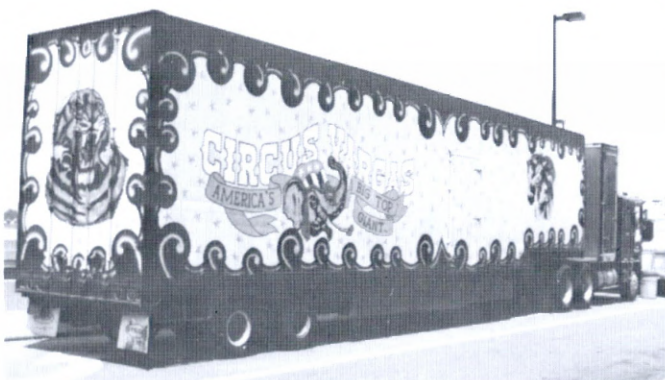


Circus Vargas on the beach at Santa Monica early in the year. Jerry Cash photo.

After wintering at its new quarters at Pio Pico, California, the show opened in San Diego on January 13, quickly moving into the Los Angeles area. It stayed in California until late May when it moved into Oregon and Washington where it played through early July. It then moved fast into the Midwest, playing Cincinnati, Dayton and Columbus, Ohio in late July. After Columbus it made one of its patented monster jumps to New Jersey and Pennsylvania where it exhibited until late August. After another long hop, the show played a stretch of dates in northern Indiana and the Chicago area through early October. A 1000 miles jump to Beaumont began a string of Texas dates which ended in El Paso in late November which concluded the year. Some later Arizona engagements were cancelled.

Business was satisfactory overall. Reports indicated that the California stands, where the Vargas title was well established, were good, as were the engagements in the Chicago area and Texas. The indoor dates in Ohio and the trek to the East, however, were death marches.

Colorfully painted Circus Vargas semi-trailer at Columbus, Ohio in late July. Fred Pfening Jr. photo.



The reclusive Michael Jackson visited the show in Santa Barbara. At Simi Valley, California on April 20 the power went out during Ted Polk's single elephant act, throwing the tent into darkness. After about ten minutes some lights came back on whereupon Poke, who had been constantly reassuring the bull during the blackout, proceeded with the act less music and spot lights.

The crowded midway had a snake show, a pony sweep, an elephant ride, a moon bounce, a grab joint, concession semi, a clown painting booth, a petting zoo, and the menagerie. The Canobbio big top, in its second season, was a 150 foot round with three 50 foot middle sections. The show carried a dozen elephants, 29 horses (the most ever), and 18 lions and tigers. Also on the roster was a zonkey, a cross between a zebra and a donkey; and a zorse, a cross between a zebra and a horse.

Vargas had spectacular lighting and costumes, the latter designed by Hedy Jo Starr in Las Vegas. The performance included a terrific web number using around twenty showgirls, and three production numbers. As in past years, a live band was used at the season's start, but after sufficient recordings had been made, tapes were used.

Among the acts opening the season were the Mayas' living statue act, Pam Rosaire and Roger Zoppe's chimps, James Crawford's liberty horses, a gaucho act, Ted Polk and Col. Joe the elephant, two flying acts, a wheel of death, and Alan Gold and his cats. When Polk left the show around mid-season, his act was taken over by elephant boss Rex Williams. The cat act became something of a revolving door after Gold left on June 1. For a while Doug Terranova worked the number. He was followed by Pom Pom Donoho who left the show at Dayton in late July. Bruno Blaszek was next. By Chicago, Kay Rosaire had joined, staying about two weeks. Blaszek returned and had the act until closing.

The show was shocked and saddened by Cliff Vargas' death in September. Vargas bequeathed the show to his two vice-presidents, Joe Muscarello and Jack Bailey. While they will certainly shape the circus in their image, it doubtless will



Kelly-Miller midway at Columbus, Ohio on May 16. The show was sponsored by the Ohio State University College of Engineering, and appeared on a wonderful grassy lot near the school. Fred Pfening Jr. photo.

retain much of the vision of its talented founder. Vargas brought tremendous creativity and showmanship to the industry and his untimely death cast a pale



Great American Circus stake driver at West Palm Beach, Florida late in the year. Arnold Brito photo.

over the season, not just for his circus, but for the entire business.

A number of mid-sized tented shows flourished during the year. They were the descendants of the 10 to 20 car railroad shows of the past which catered to smaller towns in specific geographic areas. Years ago they were titled Sun Bros., LaTena, Gentry Bros., and J. H. Eschman. In 1989 they had names such as Kelly-Miller, Franzen Bros., Great American, and Roberts Bros. From all accounts this part of the industry generally did well.

The Kelly-Miller Circus, headed by David Rawls, had a good year. It opened on March 17 in its home town of Hugo, Oklahoma, after which it played Texas, the deep South and the border states through early May when it moved into the Mid-

west. After spending over a month in Michigan, it toured Ontario for all of August. Dates in Michigan, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, and Oklahoma followed with the finale at Antlers, Oklahoma on October 28.

New equipment included a pony ride top,

for a health center, and a Labor Day weekend date in Lansing, Michigan where the tent was set up indoors.

Performers included Drista Dubsky with her poodles, Bobby and Sonya Fairchild with their whip cracking and knife throwing numbers, Dora Bautista in a contortion routine, and Heidi and Kurt Casady in an aerial cradle. A four piece band backed up the kinkers. Billy Martin was the ringmaster and also did his rola-bola act. The show carried three elephants

leased from D. R. Miller named Viola, Nina and Little Brittany. Former Carson and Barnes band leader Charlie Stevenson came out of retirement to work in the troupe's cook-house.

The Great American Circus, owned by Allan C. Hill, circusdom's most eligible bachelor for most of the year, opened in Naples, Florida on March 10. While

Opening day of Allan Hill's Great American Circus at Naples, Florida on March 10. Joe Bradbury photo.

route information was scarce, most of the spring was spent in Georgia and the Carolinas. By May the troupe was in New Jersey, and it spent most of the summer in the East. Ohio was played in August, and by mid-November the show was back home in Florida where it closed. The 13 company owned vehicles covered about 15,000 miles.

The midway had two moon bounces, a pony ride, an elephant ride, camel ride, petting zoo, and snake show. A new tent

was purchased from Anchor; it was a 190 by 90 vinyl job. A major acquisition was four baby African elephants who joined the show at Corlant, New York on July 30. Their addition brought the elephant herd to six, the others being Irene and Janet, both Asian females.

The upgraded 1989 performance was of the strongest ever from the Hill camp. Eddie Steeples and his chimps and bears,

Sylvan Walker's birds, Tim Frisco and the elephants, and Roberto Torres on the low wire were among the acts. Bill Brickle was the ringmaster and also had a dog act. Jack Forseen led a three piece band. Whitey Black was show manager.

Franzen Bros. Circus, owned by Wayne



a moon bounce, and a new marquee. The midway had a pony ride, elephant ride, moon bounce, ticket wagon, garbage joint,



Opening day of Franzen Bros. Circus at Bonita Springs, Florida, March 29. Joe Bradbury photo.

concession truck and side show. Two notable engagements were a repeat of the three day stand in Ann Arbor, Michigan

Franzen, opened at Webster, Florida, its winter quarters town, on March 14. It toured the Midwest during the summer, Texas in October, and the deep South in November, closing at Milton, Florida late that month. The troupe moved on seven semis and two straight bed trucks. The Scola Teloni tent was a 140 by 90.

The midway had a pony sweep, moon bounce, stock tent, elephant ride and combination concession trailer and ticket office. Animals included the Asian elephant Okha, two small African elephants, one dromedary, one Bactrian camel, five ponies, about fifteen horses and five goats.

Franzen himself presented much of the show, doing a single elephant act, the cat act, and assisting in the bareback riding act. Ringmaster Paul Lee also did an illusion act, a popular number on smaller shows. Curtis Cainan had a goat routine and did fire eating. The one ring performance was backed by taped music.

Roberts Bros. Circus, owned by the Doris Earl family, followed its usual route up the Atlantic coast from Florida to Maine and back, closing in mid-October. Despite heavy spring rains and Hurricane Hugo the show lost only one day to the weather. New equipment included a combination office and pit show trailer, a Kenworth tractor for the lead stock semi and two Ford trucks, one for the new office trailer and the other for concession stock truck.

The vinyl tent was a 70 foot round top with two 30 foot and a 40 foot middle sections. Among those appearing under it were the Schreiber family in a number of turns, Ron and Robin Dykes on the slack wire, and Brent DeWitt with plate spinning. The versatile Brain LaPalme was the ringmaster, did magic and fire eating, and ran the cookhouse. An elephant named Lisa, leased from D. R. Miller, was the herd. General agent Franklin Felt, a former CIA employee, was featured in a December *Wall Street Journal* article about men who had made mid-career changes.

The Culpepper and Merriweather Circus opened in Arizona in late February,



Midway of Roberts Bros. Circus with a view of the new office-pit show trailer on left. Frank Felt photo.

playing that state through early April. A month and a half in California followed, after which the troupe headed



Allen Bros. Circus on a muddy lot at Wahoo, Nebraska on June 11. Ron Sanford photo.

east, reaching Illinois in late June. All of August was spent in Wisconsin. By October the show was back in the Southwest where it closed at Coolidge, Arizona on October 18. Among offbeat stands were a number of engagements at military bases, and a string of dates in downtown Chicago for the parks department.

As in past years, the show's physical size grew during 1989. Twenty-five people were on the payroll, in 1988 the number was seventeen. New equipment included a 60 by 100 big top from Anchor which sat between 650-700, a seat wagon, and a 40 foot semi to haul the animals. The troupe moved behind six steering wheels.

Owner Red Johnson was the ringmaster. The performance was made up of Hei-

di Wendany with a dog act and her dressage horse Excalibur, Lynn Metzger Jacobs in a single trapeze turn, the Yollis with a hand balancing routine, Terrell Jacobs III with a bull whip number, and Darrell Hawkins in a rope spinning act. The show carried an elephant named Barbara.

Gopher Davenport's King Royal Circus left little record of its tour as only a handful of dates in the South, the Plains states, the Southwest and the Midwest were confirmed. Nevertheless, there was little doubt the show played a typical high



When Gopher Davenport's King Royal Circus played Trenton, Nebraska on April 28 the show was set up for open air performances. Joe Fleming photo.

grass route. A seat collapse in Minnesota in the summer made the wire services, and a Texas date in November was cancelled because the show couldn't present an insurance certificate. King

Royal apparently had a high turn over of personnel. While in Nebraska in April the acts included the elephants Boo and Tommy worked by Jack Goebell, and a small cage act and a liberty horse act. Taped music was used. Shorty and Beulah Shearer had the sideshow which contained a midget horse, orangutan, and snakes. The midway also had a moon bounce and a pony ride. This aggregation moved on about six trucks. Brother Termite Davenport apparently had a second unit out for a while in the summer using the title Can-am Bros., a take-off on the Can-Am name which was used in the past.

Allen Bros. Circus, owned by Allen Bedford, was another title which didn't spill much ink in the trade press. It opened in Louisiana in early March, and exhibited in the Southwest during the spring. It was in Nebraska in June and the Carolinas and Virginia in August and September. An unconfirmed report had



Guthrie Bros. Circus at Doraville, Georgia on opening day, September 11. Big top was former Toby Tyler menagerie tent. Joe Bradbury photo.

this one going until November.

The performance was under a 70 foot round top with three 30 foot middle sections. Phil Chandler was the ringmaster. Among the acts were Patti Antalek with her high school horse Royal Viking; she also had a dog number. By September Billy Martin, who had started the tented season with Kelly Miller, had joined. A three year old African elephant named Baby Spanky was carried, exemplifying a trend of the last decade or so in which the use of African elephants had become much more prevalent on circuses than ever before. The midway had two moon bouncers, a pony ride. The menagerie contained 2 lions, 8 goats and 2 ponies.

Vidbel's Olde Tyme Circus, headed by Al and Joyce Vidbel, opened in New Jersey on May 19 and closed in that same state in September. While much of the season was spent there, other dates were played in Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland, Delaware and Massachusetts. A highlight of the year was a three day engagement in August on Martha's Vineyard, an island seven miles off the Massachusetts coast. The location had been under-circused in the past as the last show there was Circus Kirk in 1975 and before that Mills Bros in the 1960s. The result was great local publicity and packed houses. The show was hauled to the island on a barge.

The show had a new vinyl, bale ring type big top, an 80 with a 40 foot middle which sat about 1200. Under it appeared Skin and Bones, musical clowns; Doris Smith, trained goats; the Lang family, teeterboard; and Diane Wilson and her three sea lions, Sam, Seymour, and Sadie. Mike LaTorres had a single elephant act on the bill until July 1, after which Bill Morris and his three bulls came on to finish the tour. Charlie Van Buskirk was the ring-

master, and a three piece band provided music. The show returned to its Windham, New York winter quarters a winner.

Guthrie Bros. was a new entry. Based in Roswell, Georgia, the show was owned by Pat and Ray Guthrie, the former having the Jules and Beck title out a few years ago.

hind 10 steering wheels. Barney Loter was the ringmaster, and Leon Pinter provided the music on a keyboard. Acts included Rex Horton and his bears, Jane Randall and her dressage horse and dogs, and Jack Goebell with the elephant Tommy, which was presumably leased from Gopher Davenport.

Reid Bros. Circus, owned by John and Betty Reid, started its spring-summer tour at Brookings, Oregon on April 20. After dates in Idaho, Montana, Washington, Wyoming and Nebraska the thirteen week route ended at Kearney, Nebraska in July. The tent, a 90 with three 40s, was shredded in a blow down at the final date, but was repaired just in time for the fall dates.

During this part of the itinerary Austin Miles was the ringmaster, and the acts included Vincent Von Duke's eight tigers, Scott's football dogs, the Flying Starlings, and Bucky Steele's elephants.

A September 18 to October 15 Texas run was sponsored by police groups, known in the vernacular as badge dates. The Flying Starlings, Von Duke and Steele all returned for these engagements. Among the new in-ring personnel were Mel Hall with his comedy unicycle routine and the Reinands chimps. Bobby Gibbs handled the ringmastering, which must have been like watching Rembrandt paint.

Bentley Bros. Circus also played a split season. The spring tour opened on April 14 in Oxnard, California, and ended at Salt Lake City on June 24. In between the show played New Mexico and Colorado. After about a month's lay off it reopened in New York state and played the East through early September. Dates in Ohio, Missouri, and Texas followed. This one went back to the barn after an October 3 appearance in Crowley, Louisiana. The three ringer, owned by Tommy Bentley and Chuck Clancey, played mostly grandstand and sidewalled dates, but had a few engagements indoors. Among the acts making both runs were Eddie Schmitt, cats; Diana Moyer, elephants; James Hall family, bears and unicycle; the Posso troupe, high wire; the Flying Montoyas, trapeze; and the Suarez Loyal Repensky riders. Jerry Eyestone was the ringmaster. Brian Young directed a three piece band during



Reid Bros. Circus at North Platte, Nebraska on June 26. Arthur Stensvad collection.

After opening in Doraville, Georgia on September 11, it played the peach state for at least a week and was in West Virginia in early October.

The big top was the former Toby Tyler menagerie top, a 70 with three 30s. One of the two rings used an inflatable plastic ring curb. Some, perhaps most, of the physical equipment was from Wilder Bros. Circus whose title was on at least three of the trucks. The show moved be-

Newspaper ad for Plunkett Bros. Circus appearance at Terrell, Texas on October 17. Deborah Haney collection.



PLUNKETT BROS. CIRCUS
Featuring:
ACROBATS • TIGHTWIRES •
DARKING AERIALISTS • CLOWNS
TRAINED ANIMALS • PETTING ZOO
BABY AFRICAN ELEPHANTS

SPECIAL COUPON

FREE CHILD'S TICKET
ADMIT 1 CHILD
(12 YRS & UNDER)
ONE ADULT ADMISSION
REQUIRED FOR
EACH FREE CHILD

Location:
SKATELAND-
KROGER
SHOPPING
CENTER

ADMISSION:
ADULTS \$5
CHILD \$3
Advance Tickets Available
From Merchants

SHOW TIMES
4:30
AND
7:30

Sponsored by:
ALPHA NU
SORORITY
Benefitting
Terrell State Hospital
Child Adolescent Unit

TERRELL
TUESDAY, OCT. 17



Ed Phillips' Phills Bros. Circus was a one ringer in the East. Al House photo.

the spring while Kevin King did the honors in the summer and fall.

The Plunkett Bros. Circus joined the long, long list of shows using the brothers appellation when it made a few spot dates in Texas in September and October. It used a 60 by 40 tent at some locations, and was sidewalled at others. Moving behind three semis, the troupe carried two African elephants, three camels, two llamas and assorted ponies, goats, and a donkey. Among the performers were Johnny Meah, clown; Judy Jacobs, dogs; and Christopher James Plunkett tight wire. Cleo Plunkett was the

Newspaper ad for David J. Mobbs' Circus USA during its October Miami run. Arnold Brito collection.

OPENS WEDNESDAY

ALL NEW CIRCUS USA

WED. OCT. 11 THRU SUN. OCT. 22
TAMIAMI PARK
DADE COUNTY YOUTH PARK GROUNDS
ONLY SOUTH FLORIDA APPEARANCE!!
6th ANNIVERSARY

Produced & Directed by David J. Mobbs

SEE:

- Exotic Animals
- Acrobats
- Dancers
- Horse Shows
- Circus Games
- Professional Stunts
- Educational Shows
- Daring High Wire Acts

SEE:

- Three Rings of Spectacular Family Entertainment
- Aerial Ballet
- Old Fashioned Circus Food
- Pony & Elephant Rides

LUIS MONTALVO
CUBAN WIRE WALKER DEFECTOR
22 year old son of FELIX MONTALVO owner of the
MOST FAMOUS CUBAN CIRCUS - CIRCUS MONTALVO
1st AMERICAN APPEARANCE!!

OPENING NIGHT With
ADULTS: \$5.00 CHILD: \$2.00 Coupon
Wed. Oct. 11 7:30 p.m.
BENEFITING
LEAGUE AGAINST CANCER

822-4066

1/2 Price Kid's Coupons Available Now
At All Dade and Broward Public Stores
For Circus Information Call 822-4066

CIRCUS TICKET OFFICE OPEN
(11:00AM-8:00PM DAILY)
Tamiami Park • S.W. 107th Ave.
Reserved Seats \$8.00 Gen. Adm. \$5.00
Kids Under 12 \$1.00 less than Adults

TICKETMASTER

PERFORMANCES

Wed. Oct. 11 7:30 P.M.
OPENING NIGHT BENEFIT FOR LEAGUE AGAINST CANCER

Thurs. Oct. 12	11:00 a.m.	8:00 p.m.
Fri. Oct. 13	11:00 a.m.	8:00 p.m.
Sat. Oct. 14	1:30 p.m.	4:30 p.m.
Sun. Oct. 15	1:30 p.m.	4:30 p.m.
Fri. Oct. 20	11:00 a.m.	8:00 p.m.
Sat. Oct. 21	1:30 p.m.	4:30 p.m.
Sun. Oct. 22	1:30 p.m.	4:30 p.m.

UNDER THE BIG-TOP UNDER THE BIG-TOP

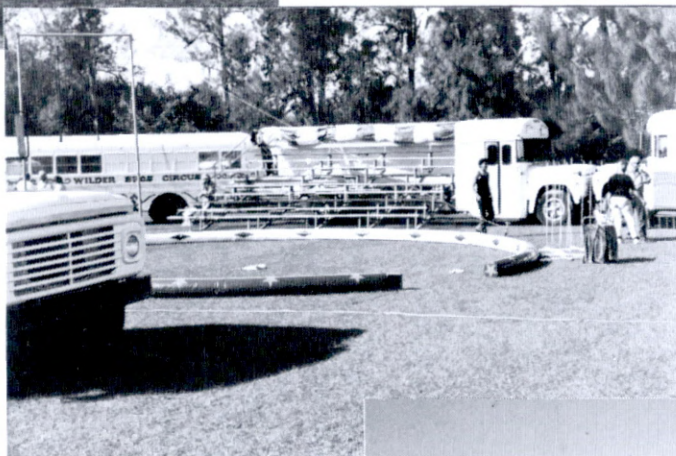
ringmaster. When not operating their own circus the Plunkett family appeared in a number of other shows, including the Ray Valentine Texas dates.

The Mighty McDaniel Circus, owned by E. J. McDaniel, an ex-carnival operator with circus booking experience, was a new entry

late winter Phillips put out a school show in New England called the Sunshine Magic Circus that included Harry DeDido doing juggling, comedy unicycle, and a dog act, and Jon Marcus with magic. Around Christmas he had Santa's Magic Review in New Jersey with Bob Good and his son with juggling and hand balancing, and Joe and Betty Fairchild in a magic routine. Phillips, who was a clown on the late year dates, appeared to be the only showman to have both a school show and a tent out during the year.

Wilder Bros. Circus, owned by Richard Keller, was out for a while in February. The planned opening at Balm, Florida on February 23 was cancelled because of sleet. Two days later it did open at nearby Riverview, and played Ruskin the next day. Reports that this one had spot dates for several months thereafter were unconfirmed, although some of the equipment was used on Guthrie Bros. in the fall.

At Ruskin the sponsor backed out at the last minute



Duke Keller's Wilder Bros. had a few sidewalled dates in Florida in the late winter. Note bus remodeled into seat wagon, and inflatable ring curb. John Polacsek collection.



Oscarian Bros. elephant truck in Sarasota during parade week in early January. Fred Pfening Jr. photo.

in the tented corner of the industry. Opening in Keller, Texas on April 29, the show had terrible weather the first week out which killed the gate and ripped apart the 14 year old former Circus Kirk big top. While a route was booked through the end of May—including a scheduled appearance at Ringling, Oklahoma on the 16th—the show died at Lone Grove, Texas on May 9 when, according to one account, the performers abandoned the show after a missed pay day. Thus the Mighty McDaniel Circus joined the ranks of troupes whose life spans were measured in weeks or months, rather than years or decades.

Phills Bros. Circus played the East during the summer under a 90 by 60 tent. The acts included Gary Noel and his dogs, Cindy Herriott on web and dressage riding, the Bob Good duo juggling, and Bret Bronson and his baby African elephant Tanya. Owner Bill Phillips was the ringmaster and did a gorilla parody act. In

without having sold a ticket; the meager audience were all friends of show personnel. The troupe performed in a sidewalled arena that sat about 600, and moved on converted buses. Acts included Bill Schreiber's dogs, juggling by Melray Silverlake, and plate spinning by Roger DuBois. Frank Thompson's elephant Liz was worked by his son Tommy.

Carlos Farfan's Circo D'Carlo which catered exclusively to the Hispanic community in the Los Angeles area did not go out. Neither did John Schoonbeck's Friendly Bros. Circus. Oscarian Bros. Circus, owned by the Manuel Romas family, had some outdoor engagements in Florida in the spring. Part of the family later worked on Bentley Bros. None of these



Ringling-Barnum used a tented menagerie at few stands including this one in Tampa when the red unit was there in January. Fred Pfening Jr. photo.

shows had a single mention in the industry press which will create interesting problems for future chroniclers, and begs the question of how many shows in the past have come and gone without leaving a trace of ink in trade publications.

Circus USA, owned by David J. Mobbs, made its annual tented engagement in Miami from October 11 to 22. Among the performers were the Flying Cortez, Steele's bears, and Laura Herriott who worked horses and camels. The troupe's star was Luis Montalvo, a twenty-two year old Cuban wire walker who had defected in Madrid in the spring. He had immense appeal in strongly anti-Castro south Florida.

Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey's 119th edition opened on December 27, 1988 in Venice, Florida. The show worked its way up the east coast, reaching the Meadowlands on March 7 for six days. It then moved to Long Island for a week, after which it spent a month at Madison Square Garden. In a new routing procedure the troupe went back to the Meadowlands for another six days on April 30 which concluded seven weeks in the New York City area. The western

swing began in June and ran through mid-October with most of the time spent in California. The tour ended in late November in Chicago, after playing the usual two locations.

Gunther Gebel-Williams in the first year of his two season farewell tour was the feature. Williams, unquestionably the premier performer of

ability. Few other trainers in American circus history handled the range of animals he did over the years, and none presented as many different types in the same performance. He was a worthy choice to be the first non-sports figure to have a banner with his portrait on it unveiled in Madison Square Garden, scene of his greatest triumphs. Williams was further honored on March 10 when New York City mayor Ed Koch presented him with a pewter apple to commemorate the 1138 performances he gave in the Garden. The elephant herd participated in the Central Park ceremony.

Besides Williams, the display included many top acts including the Ayak brothers on the single trapeze, the Flying Lunas and the Flying Alejandros, and the Carillo brothers on the high wire. Two novelties not seen on the big show for years were a living statue act and a ski jump routine called the Royal Canadian Aerial Ski Squadron. In the flying trapeze department Jose Luna caught the quad during the year, and two female flyers caught the triple.

The animal inventory included 22 tigers, 2 leopards, 8 brown bears, 13 wolfhounds, 2 sea lions, 29 horses, 2 ponies, 2 guanacos, 2 dromedary camels, and 21 elephants, three of whom were African. Two of the pachyderms were born and bred in America, making them the first duo born in captivity to travel on the same circus since 1887 when Columbia and Baby Bridgeport were paired on Barnum and London. The show added a tented menagerie in Tampa and Salt Lake City. King Tusk made the Tampa and St. Petersburg dates early in the season, then returned to quarters to prepare for the trip to Japan. The death of the two sea lions in August was a sad occurrence.

The red unit moved on 44 railroad cars consisting of 4 stocks, 2 storage, 12 flats, 1 bi-level, and 25 sleepers. On July 26 the show had a derailment while leaving Anaheim on July 26 five cars were derailed. Fortunately no personnel or animals suffered injuries.

Ringling-Barnum blue unit stock cars on the Seminole and Gulf siding near Fort Myers, Florida on January 17. Joe Bradbury photo.



The Ringling-Barnum red unit featured a living statue act, shown here at Atlanta's Omni arena on January 26. Richard J. Reynolds III photo.

his generation, was the first circus personality since Clyde Beatty whose name was a household word. In his final routines he presented the first rate elephant, horse and tiger acts for which he had become famous. Often overlooked because of his showmanship and charismatic personality was the remarkable scope of his training



Ringling-Barnum's blue unit generally played shorter stands at smaller venues than the red show. It opened on December 28, 1988 in Miami after laying over at the Florida State Fairgrounds in Tampa following its December 4 closing in Columbus, Ohio. After appearing in the East, South, and Midwest the troupe laid off from May 29 to June 11 before heading to Texas for long runs in Houston and Dallas-Fort Worth. After playing smaller towns such as Casper, Wyoming, and



Bismarck, North Dakota, the circus became a big city show again in late September when it appeared in Indianapolis, Detroit, Boston, Cleveland, Pittsburgh and Buffalo where the season ended on November 19. Roanoke, Virginia was on the route for the first time in 18 years. On May 26-28 the show was in Springfield, Illinois while the other unit was in Springfield, Massachusetts, a coincidence of little consequence.

This was the second time around for the Tahar alligator wrestling theme. Other acts included Carmen Hall's baboons, the Quiros high wire act, the Peters wheel of death, Axel Gautier and the elephants, the Flying Vazquez and the Flying Morales, and Larry Allen Dean and the cats. Dean was a protege of the legendary Red Hartman who saw his pupil perform on Ringling for the first time in Dallas. Hartman gave him a standing ovation. The Vazquez flyers' contract was not renewed, making this the last tour of that notable act under the Ringling-Barnum banner.

The forty-five car train had its problems during the year. While en route from Louisville to Washington, D. C. in March a fire was discovered in one of the cars. The train made an emergency stop where a volunteer fire department fought the flames for five hours. The burned car stayed on the train and was repaired during the Washington engagement. A train wreck on August 28 near Billings, Montana derailed 14 cars, all coaches including the pie car.

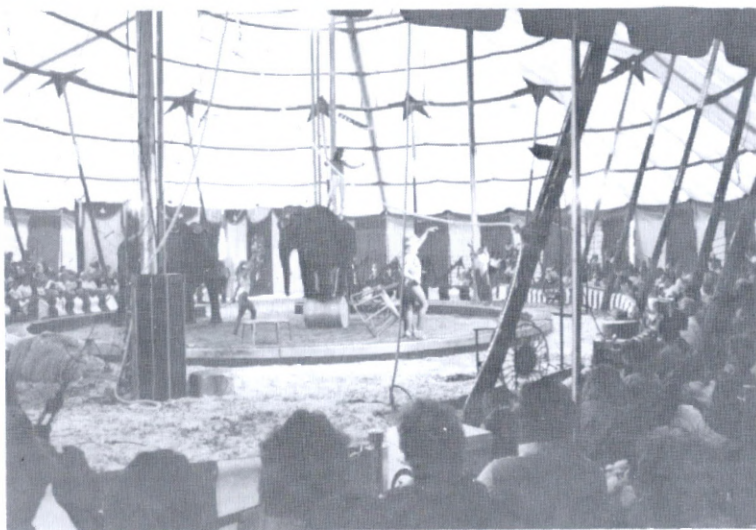
The gold unit made a second tour of Japan, opening in late March. The performance, held inside a high-tech tent, was a reprise of the King Tusk show presented on the red unit in 1987 and 1988. Besides the big tusker, other acts were Satin, aerialists; Mercury Morgan, trick bicycle; Rudolph Delmonte, contortion; the Wee Gets, hand balancing; the Flying Caballeros; and Roy Wells with the

A popular publicity gimmick used by Ringling-Barnum was feeding the elephants lunch before the media. Here the red unit bulls chow down in New York City's Central Park in April. Herb Clement photo.

John Cueno elephants.

Unlike the previous trek to the Orient, this edition was a bust with much smaller attendance and an early closing. In November the Japanese company which contracted with Ringling-Barnum for the dates filed a \$16.5 million suit against the Feld organization accusing them of fraud by substituting second class performers and animal trainers in the performance. This, they claimed, led to smaller audiences, which averaged 860 per show compared to 2700 in 1988. Kenneth Feld denied the allegations and maintained the show had first rate acts which, of course, it did.

The Royal Hanneford Circus appeared in Milwaukee as part of the the Great Circus Parade in July. The Mark Karoly elephant act, shown here, was a feature. Fred Pfening Jr. photo.



In other Ringling-Barnum news, a mini-circus was presented at the White House on April 27 to promote Barbara Bush's Reading is Fundamental literacy program. Acts were Johnny Peers' dogs, juggler Dick Franco, and the Anastasni brothers, risley. Bill Pruyn conducted the Marine Corps band as part of the promotion. The performance was under canvas, making it the first time the Ringling-Barnum organization had erected a big top on American soil since 1956.

The November issue of *Reader's Digest* had a cover story on Gunther Gebel-Williams, a wonderful publicity coup. Michelle Lee from the Knott's Landing television show was the host for the annual broadcast of the performance from St. Petersburg. Clown College graduated its 1000th student in October, a benchmark that emphasized the impact of that august institution on silliness in America. In late November the corporate offices moved to Vienna, Virginia on the outskirts of Washington, D. C.

Siegfried & Roy, produced by Ringling-Barnum president Kenneth Feld, had a successful run in Japan under a special tent, and in the fall broke house records at New York City's Radio City Music Hall. At year's end they were preparing to open at the new Mirage Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas. Feld had a hand in producing the hugely popular Broadway show *Large-ly New York*, which showcased the eccentric comedic genius of Bill Irwin, a Clown College graduate and former Pickle Family Circus clown. In further activities, the company operated five ice shows world wide.

While the year had its triumphs and glories, there were some difficulties. Grosses were down from past seasons at some dates, Steven Leber and the Moscow

Circus created a challenge by offering an alternative to arena managers, and the Japanese problem was doubtless vexing. Plans for a 1990 international tour were apparently scraped near year's end after the show had purchased an 8500 seat air conditioned tent to use on such ventures.

Circuses sponsored by Shrine Temples and other fraternal groups, most notably police and fire fighter organizations, continued to thrive. They

ROYAL HANNEFORD CIRCUS

JUST ANNOUNCED

Fun-Filled Entertainment for the Entire Family!

EXOTIC ANIMALS! THRILLING ACROBATS! HILARIOUS CLOWNS! AND MORE!

THUR., MARCH 9 thru SAT., MARCH 11

TICKETS GO ON SALE TOMORROW!

All Seats Reserved
 \$12.00 - \$9.00 - \$7.00
 Children 12 & Under \$4.00

PALACE

Tickets Available at The Palace Box Office and all ticket outlets including Hudson's, Great Stuff and Select AAA. Charge by phone at (313) 423-6666. For group discount information call (313) 377-8201. For more information call (313) 377-8600.

SHRINE CIRCUS

March 10th-26th

Tickets on Sale Monday, February 20th

At the State Fair Ticket Office, AAA, and all Ticketmaster Outlets. Tickets priced from \$3.00 - \$9.00. For more information 366-6200.

AT THE STATE FAIR COLISEUM.

Opposition ads for Royal Hanneford and Zerbini from the Detroit Free Press, February 19. John Polacsek collection.

were an important segment of the business, creating work for hundreds of acts for varying lengths of time, in some cases the entire season. On the down side, auspices circuses blurred public awareness of different titles, creating something of a generic brand name "Shrine Circus" in the public consciousness. Because their box office receipts were usually the result of their members ticket selling ability rather than the quality of the performance, they often created a situation in which low expenses rather than high production values were more important. Some observers, both in and out of the business, felt this had a long term deleterious effect on the appeal and the status of the circus in general.

The Royal Hanneford Circus, owned by Tommy and Struppi Hanneford, emerged as the dominant force in the Shrine circus business with two units reportedly playing 49 of the 149 available

dates. Unlike most other Shrine producers, Hanneford carried its own spec with special costumes and props. Circus Maximus as it was called, while not as extensive as Barnum and Bailey's Nero production of the 1890s, was on a par with the grand entrees of the larger tented shows and certainly the best of its kind in the Shrine world.

The red unit started the year with the traditional early January opening in Flint, Michigan and had other major Shrine dates in Cincinnati, Dallas, Baltimore, and Indianapolis. Among the acts at Flint were the Jacobs, Hanneford and Woodcock elephants, contortionist Hugo Zamorathe, Gaylord Maynard with his horse Chief Bear Paw, the Lenz chimps, the Flying Rodriguez, the Karoly riders, Dolly Jacobs on the Roman rings, and Jorge Barreda's lions. Charlie Hackett was the ringmistress and Kay Parker directed a five piece band. As with virtually all shows specializing in auspices work, the program changed from date to date. After Jorge Barreda left for the Circus World Museum, Carol Marcan came on to work her cat act. Donnie Johnson's elephants worked some dates as did Billy Barton and Luis Munoz. This unit was the first circus to appear at the plush Palace of Auburn Hills, near Detroit. This non-Shrine stand was in opposition to the Zerbini show which was appearing nearby for the Detroit Shrine. While most of the engagements were indoors, some stands were under canvas.

Tarzan Zerbini's Circus made a number of under canvas Shrine dates using the former Circus Tivoli big top. Windsor, Ontario, June 11. John Polacsek photo.



Tarzan Zerbini Circus elephants at Windsor, Ontario, June 11. John Polacsek photo.

The green unit opened in Greenwood, South Carolina on March 15, using some of the acts from the red troupe which was split after Auburn Hills, plus new additions. This unit also had some serious Shrine dates including Columbus, Houston, Tampa, and New Orleans. The RoyalSanger title was used for some September Texas appearances. Among the new in-ring talent were the Flying Ibarra, the Starlords and their aerial motorcycle, Bob Moore's dogs, Patricia Zerbini and her tigers, and, on another occasion, Vincent Von Duke and his cats. When it set up under canvas in Milwaukee for the Great Circus Parade in July, a feature was Barry Lubin, Grandma the clown of Big Apple Circus fame.

While making the Shrine date in Toledo in early May, some of the performers participated in a tribute to the late Eloise Berchtold who worked at the local zoo in the mid-1960s. Among those speaking was Buckles Woodcock. The personnel were served a terrific Thanksgiving meal during the New Orleans Shrine circus. The wonderful meal, which was attended by the city's mayor, recalled the feasts the great railroad shows of the past served on special occasions.

Tarzan Zerbini's Circus was another major Shrine producer, particularly in Canada, with two units on the road, appearing both indoor and under canvas. The western unit opened in Ft. Wayne in February, and after a few other American dates crossed into western Canada in early March. Dates



in Washington, Oregon, Montana and Kansas followed, including the Portland Shrine. Almost all of May was spent in Saskatchewan under a one ring European style tent seating 3000. After a few days in Alberta, the show moved into British Columbia from June 3 to July 8 when the western unit's tour ended.

At Fort Wayne the acts included Derrick Rosaire and Tony the wonder horse; Horton's, Bauer's and Steele's bears; Starlords and Centrons, aerial motorcycles; Joe Bauer, wheel of death; the Flying Fornasaris; and Pierre Spenle and Daniel Suskow, tigers. Two cage acts on the same bill was a rarity in recent years. The program was modified as the season progressed and at later engagements the King Charles troupe, the Flying Cortez, and the Flying Starlings appeared. Acts also moved from one unit to the other.

The Zerbini eastern unit started for the Detroit Shrine, the grande dame of the genre, on March 10. After a few Michigan and Ohio tented dates, the show headed for western Canada where it played through late May. June through early September were spent in Ontario, Quebec and the Maritime provinces. This unit closed on October 15 in Chattanooga.

John Herriott was ringmaster at Detroit. He introduced, among others, the Flying Espanas, Dick Kohlreiser's ponies, Reinand's chimps, the Zercoff tigers presented by Pierre Spenle, and aerialists Sugar and Spice. During the Ontario swing, Joe Bauer was the ringmaster and also had his wheel of death. Daniel Suskow worked the tigers.

Zerbini also had the Joplin, Missouri Shrine date under canvas around Thanksgiving. The tent was set up indoors for the annual Christmas engagement in Montreal. Among the acts there were the Great Wallendas, the Flying Ibarra, and the Zerbini tigers and elephants.

The Coronas Circus was another large show working under Shrine auspices, occasionally having two units on the road. The show did fair dates in the early part of the year before the spring Shrine schedule which ran from April 7 through June. More fairs took up the months of July through October, after which three more Shrine appearances finished the year. Major fairs were in Atlanta, St. Louis, Fort Worth, Jacksonville, and Kansas City.

Acts at the South Florida Fair at West Palm Beach from January 25 to February



The Coronas Circus had a number of big Shrine dates included the one for the Yaarab Temple at Marietta, Georgia from April 21 to 30. Joe Bradbury photo.

3 included Gilda Cristiani and her uncaged leopards and black panthers, the Osorio brothers on the high wire, the Fosssets kangaroo and chimp acts, and Luis-Munoz with his cannon. Mike Pike had the band and Lucky Larabee was the ringmaster. At Atlanta in April the show appeared under a rented Harold Barnes top which was 150 foot round with four 50 foot middles. The United Shows Carnival with about 20-25 rides were also there under Shrine auspices. At Fort Worth in November Trudy Strong made her debut in the cage by presenting the Cueno tigers. Other acts were the King Charles comedy unicycles, the Flying Cortez and Flying

Doug Terranova and the Don Johnson tigers at the Eddie Zacchini Shrine date in Chicago in March. Sheelagh Jones photo.



Lunas, and the Cueno, Cristiani, and Coronas elephants. Bob Atterbury's loop the loop rocket car, back on tour after five years, made the St. Louis date.

The George Carden Circus International appeared for the Shrine in San Antonio, Denver and other cities, mostly in the Midwest, Southwest, Plains states, and Canada. Like a number of their competitors, this one had two units out for part of the season, one of which made fairs. At Springfield, Illinois the acts were, in part, Chris and Laura Kilpatrick, cats; Bucky Boger, trained buffalo; the Flying Fornasaris; and Henry Munoz, human cannonball. Joe Frisco

worked the four Carden elephants. Ree Schweizer was the ringmistress. Paul Niebauer handled the announcing at other engagements.

The American Continental Circus, headed by Patricia Gatti, opened in Fort Stockton, Texas on February 4, and closed in that state in late October. In between it played the Southwest, and both the American and Canadian West, mostly for police and fire groups, but with some Shrine dates. For a brief period, it operated two units. Performers included Mike and Michelle Clark, lions and tigers; Eric Braun, dogs; Posso family, high wire; Joe Lemke, chimps; Tommy Donoho, elephants; and Pages and Ayalas, flying trapeze. Bob Welz was the singing ringmaster. This troupe appeared both indoors and in grandstands, and maintained the same program throughout the year because its route offered a full season's work.

George Hubler's International Super Circus had sponsored and fair dates throughout the year, mostly in the Midwest. A number of them were for the Shrine including one under canvas at Peoria, Illinois where Barney Adkins, son of the immortal Jess Adkins, was the temple's circus chairman. At his traditional Mentor, Ohio appearance Kay Rosaire worked the lions and tigers, Catherine Hanneford had the liberty horses and elephants, and the Great Wallendas walked the high wire. About a month later at Dayton, Ohio George Valla walked the low wire, Doug Terranova had 12 tigers, the Hentoff and Hoyer duo worked trapeze, the Flying Lunas flew, and Ben De-

Wayne handled the elephants. Lucky Larabee was the ringmaster and Bill Browning had a 7 piece band.

Eddie Zacchini's Olympic International Circus began the season in its usual way at the Florida State Fair in Tampa. The lengthy Chicago Shrine date followed. Other spring Shrine dates lasted through June, including one in Cleveland. The show had some fall fair dates, one of which was in Montgomery, Alabama. At the Florida State Fair in February the acts included Phil and Francine Schacht with their elephant Dondi, the Wainwright living statue act, Cindy Herriott's cloud swing, and the Flying Caballeros. Performing personnel at Chicago included the Fossett's chimps and kangaroo, the Bautista teeterboard act, the Flying Rodogels, and Doug Terranova and the Donnie Johnson cats. Karl Killinger was the band leader and Ree Schweizer was the ringmistress. It was the eighth and last time the show had the big Medinah Temple contract there. Owner Eddie Zacchini, a popular figure in the business, died on December 7. Brother Hugo was to take over management of the organization.

The Hamid-Morton Circus, the most venerable of all Shrine circuses, played its usual winter-spring route starting in Roanoke, Virginia on February 3 and ending at Norfolk, Virginia on June 25. In between they played some good sized towns such as Tulsa, Oklahoma City, Providence and Pittsburgh. The line up at Roanoke included Davide Zoppe's monkeys, Kay Hanneford's horses, Susan Sheryll's Afghans, Kay Rosaire's cats, George Hanneford's elephants, the Flying Cortez, and Hugo Zacchini with his cannon. Joe Dallas directed the band. The Hamid organization had some summer fairs and put on a number of Christmas shows, both in the East.

Garden Bros., headed by Ian Garden, was another old title. Most of its dates were in Canada, but it did have a few engagements in the United States. At Allentown, Pennsylvania on March 3-5 the acts included Andre Skarbecki's lions, Heidi Herriott on single trapeze, Doris Galambos' basketball dogs, the Reinand's chimps, Billy Vaughan and his comedy car, Bobby Moore's elephants, and Rick and Debbie Wallenda on the high wire.

Johnny Jordon's Circus was a new title in the world of auspices shows. He had a number of dates in the South, West and Canada from March through September, including the Las Vegas Shrine circus. Jennifer Smith's cannon, Les Kimes pork chop review, Billy Barton with his cloud



Billy Martin's Cole All-Star Circus used this flashy stationary. A school show, this troupe made dates in New York state early in the year. Bill Biggerstaff collection.

swing, the Salaam Arab tumblers, the Flying Valentines, and the Great Wallendas were some of the in-ring talent at the Vegas date.

Circus Odyssey, owned by Ed Migley, had Shrine and other dates in the East and Midwest from February to at least May, including Boston and Cleveland. The show also spent almost four weeks in Puerto Rico in February and March. For the big Harrisburg Shrine appearance, the show brought in the Bill Morris and Ben DeWayne elephants to augment those of Carin Cristiani who had the bulls on the other Migley dates. David Smith's cannon act was also added.

Ron Kelroy had Shrine dates early in the year, including Louisville, and some spring fairs. In June and July, the show made Texas for promoter Ray Valentine who called the troupe Circus Valentine. Another string of Texas dates were played for Valentine from early September until mid-October. During the first Texas run the exhibit included Helen Carpenter, lions and tigers; Christopher James Plunkett, slack wire; the Flying Ceceres, the Plunkett elephants; and Luis Munoz, human cannonball. During the October dates John Pelton took over the cat act, and the Espanas were the new flyers. Rick Percy had the band on these dates, and David Maas was the ringmaster.

Alberto Zoppe's Circus Europa had a few Shrine dates, and some stage and fair bookings, mostly in the East and Midwest. An exception was an appearance in a Tulsa, Oklahoma theater in January where the performers were, among others, Tino Wallenda Zoppe on the high wire; the Wainwrights, living statues; Gary Noel, clowning and dogs; the Bertinis, low wire; and the Donnie Johnson African elephants. Mike Pike was the bandmaster, and Cathy Rogers was the singing ringmistress. The line up changed by the time Zoppe appeared in Pittsburgh in October where Gina Dubsky's uncaged leopards, Davide Zoppe's monkeys, Giovanni Zoppe's pad riding, Harry James Dub-

sky's hand balancing, and Susan Sheryll's Afghans provided most of the bill.

Gracie Macintosh's M & M Circus had its usual Iowa and Nebraska Shrine bookings in April and May. It also had spot dates in June and August in Michigan and Missouri. The performing personnel changed somewhat during the spring fez tour. At Omaha,

Doug Terranova had the Don Johnson cats and elephants, the Garcias family had the flying act, T. J. Howell worked his juggling and unicycle routines, the Centrons fired up their aerial motorcycle, and the Keiths worked their rolling globe act. When the show performed at Mt. Clemens, Michigan in early June under a rented Harold Barnes tent, the acts included Billy Barton's cloud swing, Debbie Wallenda's sway pole, and Julius Von Uhl's cats. Bill Browning led the band and James Douglass ringmastered.

Bill Kay had a few Shrine dates including Syracuse and Albany in the spring. At Albany the acts were Andre Skarbecki's lions, Lubov Pisarenkova on the aerial rings, Billy Vaughan and his clown car, Bobby Moore's elephants, the Broquette's dogs, the Garcia flyers, and Yuri Krasnov, hand balancing. Kay had some serious health problems during the year which apparently curtailed his activity.

Clyde Bros. Circus, owned by Don Johnson of Seagoville, Texas, had a string of one dayers in small Iowa towns in June, and at least one late summer Shrine date. Among the acts on the Iowa tour were Lillianna Kristensen's leopards, the Flying Espanas, Joe Howarth's chimps, Herbie and Maricella Weber on the tight rope, and Bobby Gibbs with Johnson's African elephants. Jim Howell was the announcer. At the Las Cruces, New Mexico Shrine date in September, Vincent Von Duke had the tigers, Billy Barton did his cloud swing, and the Flying Valentines worked their flying return act. Bobby Gibbs was the announcer and worked the elephant act. Johnson had tiger and elephant acts which he booked with other producers for much of the year. The African elephant act consisted of three small bulls named Kampa, Randa and Tonka, the latter of which died of salmonella late in the year.

Wayne McCary made the Maine Shrine Circus circuit for the 22nd consecutive year, playing five towns from April 14 to May 6. In the single ring display appeared Andre Skarbecki, lions; Heidi Herriott, single trapeze; Reinands' chimps; Lubov Pisarenkova, ring trapeze; Peter and Betty Rosendahl, unicycle; David Rosaire, dogs; the Flying Guttys; Yuri Krasnov, hand balancing; and Bill Morris, elephants.

Charley Van Buskirk was the announcer and Fred Petra directed a five piece band.

Ernie McLean's All Star Shrine Circus played small towns in Kentucky for five weeks in April and May. Making this trek were Jim Arneberg, dogs; the Daltons, hand balancing; Bobby and Rosa Gibbs, elephants; the Wainwrights, living statues; and Dorian Blake, illusionist.

A number of circuses specialized in playing fairs and festivals. Often they were booked by carnivals which used them as free shows to attract crowds to their midways, or were sponsored by large corporations. Most performances took around an hour, and, unlike the 1920s when the American Circus Corporation's big shows regularly appeared at fairs in the fall, were generally conducted in one ring by a handful of performers.

The Liebel Family Circus made the fair circuit in the East, Midwest, and South with two shows from June until September. The red unit used a 100 foot round top and a five person cast. Owner Tomi Liebel did juggling, unicycle, stilt and ladder walking, the elephant act, and a one man band routine, giving new meaning to the term "generally useful." The blue unit used a 90 by 60 foot tent. J. P. Theron was general manager, ringmaster, and worked a cradle act with his wife Doris. Lillianna Hergottova did foot juggling, and Jeff Young presented a four pony liberty act, and a pick out pony routine. Calling itself the Birchfield-Liebel Circus, it did about a week of one dayers in central Florida in December.

The George Hanneford Circus worked fairs in at least Pennsylvania, Virginia and Florida during the year. Appearing under canvas at the Virginia State Fair in Richmond in September were Jacqueline Zerbini's tigers; Rudi and Sue Lenz's chimps, and Catherine Hanneford's liberty horses and elephants. David Locke was ringmaster. Hanneford spent much of the year working his horses and elephants on other shows.

Farnum Bros. Circus appeared at a number of California fairs and festivals throughout the year, and also did some promoted dates. Based in Bakersfield, the show used a 120 by 80 foot Bruno big top. Owner Chuck Farnum was ringmaster, magician and dog act presenter. Also appearing in the ring were Gary and Kari Johnson's elephant, John Baldwin's chimp, and Chester Cable, a foot juggler, all backed up by a two piece band. Farnum also had a petting zoo and reptile

show which sometimes appeared in conjunction with the circus.

Peggy Cline Kaltenbach's Circus Continental booked about ten weeks of Midwestern fairs in the summer. Among the acts engaged were Helen Carpenter, cage act; Bobby and Rosa Gibbs, Don Johnson elephants; Delilah Wallenda, high wire; and Les Reinands, chimps and unicycle. Rick Legg was the announcer. Dave Twomey's Happytime Circus appeared at California fairs under canvas. Twomey clowning, and presented dogs and a llama;



Bobby and Rosa Gibbs with the Donnie Johnson African elephants during the Ernie McLean Shrine dates in Kentucky in the spring. J. Scott Pyles photo.

and Ed Russell did magic in the performance. Swan Bros. Circus, headed by Mike and Andy Swan, also worked California fairs. John Winn's Europorama had dates in the Pacific Coast states in the spring. Otto Berosini worked his mixed cat act, and David Blasko had his elephant on this one. Patricia Canestrelli was the ringmistress.

Carla Wallenda had her circus at a number of fairs including one at Naples, Florida in January, and another in West Virginia in July. The Flores Family Circus was presented at fairs in Mississippi and Louisiana in May and June. Jorge Barreda had the circus at the Mississippi State Fair from October 4-15. Billy Barton, the Flying Valentines, and Jennifer Smith, human cannonball, were among the performers. Barreda's father Jose was manager as producer Jorge could only be on hand for opening because of working the concurrent Royal Hanneford date in Knoxville. George Moffat's Circus International made a grandstand appearance at a Zanesville, Ohio fair in August with Davide's Zoppe's monkeys, Susan Sheyll's Afghans, the Flying Valentines, the

George Hanneford elephants and horses, and Billy Barton. Patti Wendt was the ringmistress, and Bill Browning conducted a three piece band.

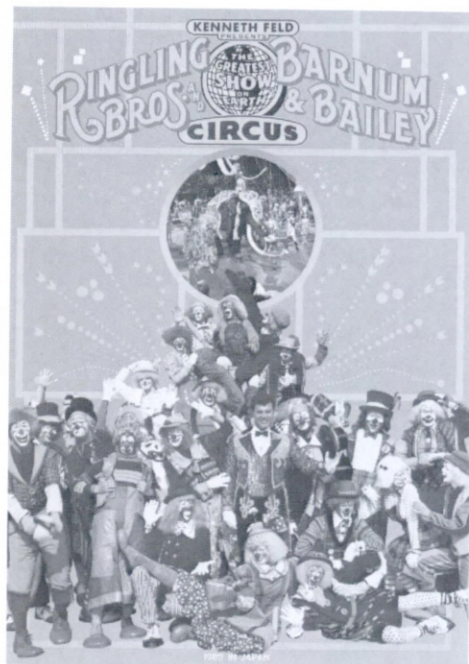
Petting zoos were a popular attraction at fairs and festivals. They were something of a throw back to the menageries that toured the country before the Civil War, although their modern descendants exhibit both exotic and domesticated animals. The Commerford Petting Zoo from Goshen, Connecticut was the leader of this end of the business, with as many as

three units on the road simultaneously, and many wild animals including a giraffe that once trouped with Ringling-Barnum. Dave Hale's 5 H Ranch Petting Zoo, Joe Hendrick's Educational Petting Zoo, Frisco Bros. Circus, the Bob Jones Petting Zoo, Fred Wynn's Petting Zoo, and Jim Stephen's Cross Creek Petting Zoo were a few of the other titles. The latter played small fairs and festivals in the East with a 65 animal exhibition which included an African elephant, llamas, miniature horses, buffalo calves, Sicilian donkeys, pygmy goats, deer, a pot bellied pig, a baby kanga-

roo, and a camel, all of which sounded like the inventory of a Zoological Institute show of the 1830s. Showfolks also had pig racing and similar attractions on show grounds. Albert Rix had The Great Bear Show at a number of fairs, an interesting variation on the animal display theme.

School shows, so-called because they often appeared in school gyms and auditoriums, had their niche in the business as fund raising vehicles for smaller organizations such as PTAs and charitable institutions looking to raise modest amounts of money. Usually one ring presentations with only a few acts and fewer animals, these circuses generally played small communities from approximately October to May.

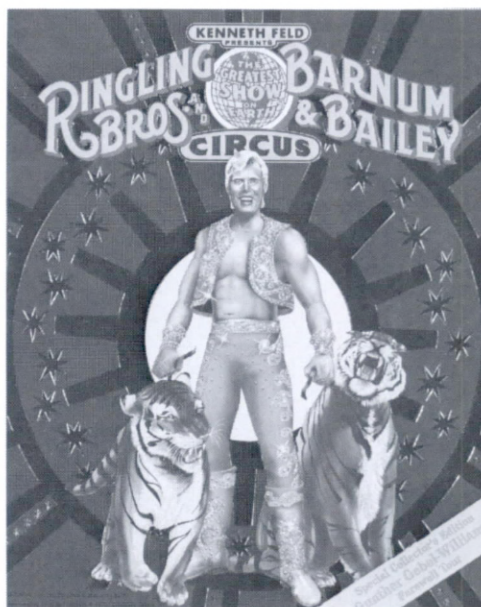
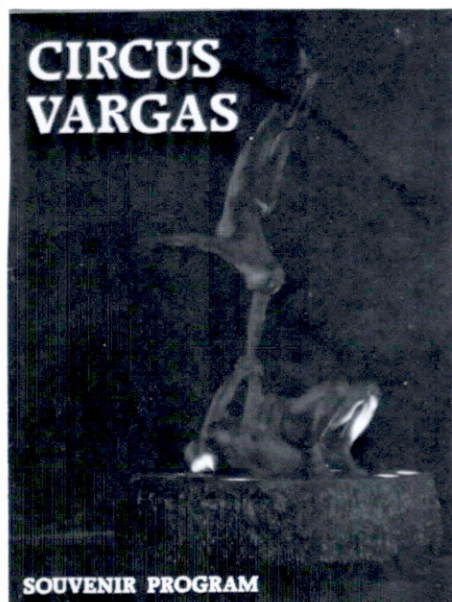
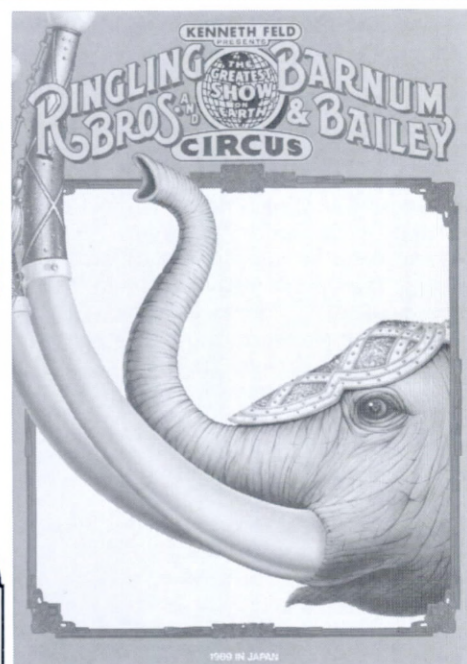
Big John Strong was the leader of this segment of the business with multiple units on the road much of the year, appearing from Ohio to the Pacific Ocean, using a variety of titles such as Children's Variety Show, Clown Capades and Wonderful World of Magic. Strong's daughter Nicole managed one unit while Jerome Ellis bossed another. Acts on his troupes included the Conners family working rola bola, unicycle and trampoline acts; Charles and the Lady doing magic, and Stephen Fisher with low wire and balloon art routines. On December 1-3, Strong produced a tented circus at Union City,

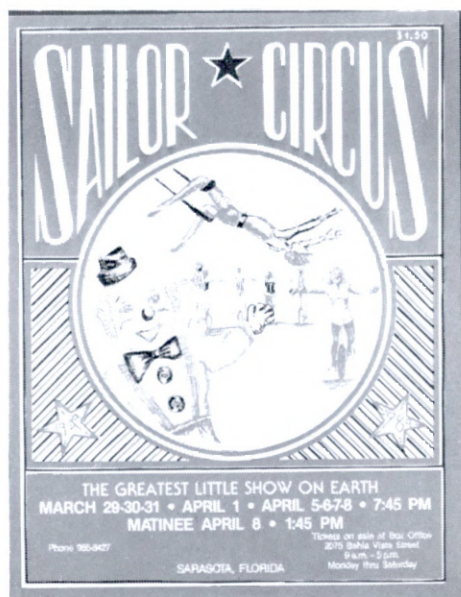
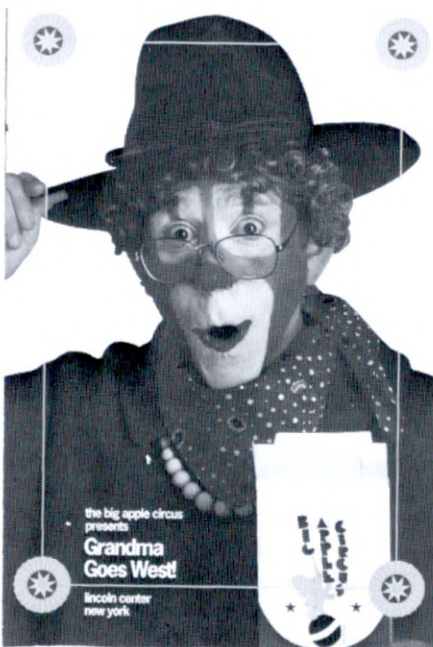
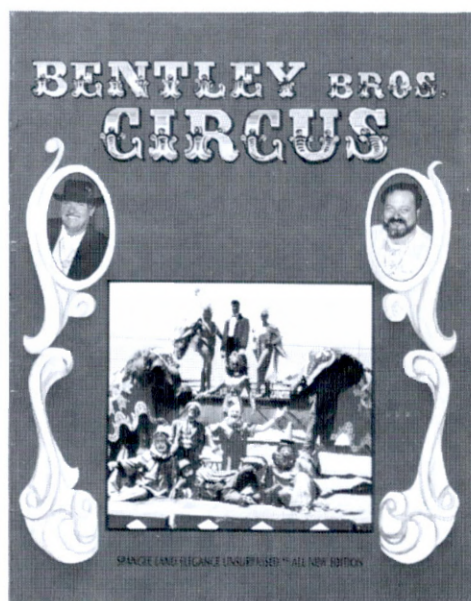


1989

CIRCUS

PROGRAMS





California with Gary Johnson's elephants, Chester Cable's foot juggling, Sugar and Spice's cradle act, and Billy Barton's cloud swing. Brian LaPalme handled the announcing in addition to fire eating and illusions.

Bill Garden's Holiday Hippodrome was another well established name in the genre. His Sarasota based troupe played the Eastern half of the country in the spring, fall and winter. Among his performers were Irving Hall with his baboons, the Bob Lang family jugglers, and the Zachary Gauchos. Floyd Bradbury was the road manager. Like most of the personnel in this end of the business he wore many hats as he announced the show, did mag-

ic in it, led its three piece band, and worked concessions.

Ron Bacon's Famous Cole Circus had appearances in the Midwest, mainly Ohio and Indiana, from March to May and again in the fall. Among the performers were Dorrita's soccer playing dogs, Skin and Bones doing their musical clown number, and Dick Johnson with his balloon art. Veteran Charles Schlarbaum headed a three piece band. Jose Cole's early season run lasted from March to May, and, after the summer hiatus common to this type show, started up again in September. Appearing in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa, the exhibition featured Katusca's dogs, Los Latinos on the low wire, and Tom Demry's exotic animals includ-

ing Anna Louise the elephant. Gary Holveck was the singing ringmaster and did illusions.

Jim Nordmark's International All Star Circus frolicked most of the year, appearing in the South, Midwest and East. In-ring personnel included Joanne Wilson with her elephant Susie; Bela Tabak in a snake and alligator routine, a peacock act, and a girl to leopard illusion; clown Dusty Sadler who also had a dog number; Shane Hansen with juggling and magic; and Ron Perry in a gorilla parody. Lee Ketchum was the manager and Chris Price led the band. Like many other school shows this one donned a white beard and red suit at the end of the year to become Santa's Cir-

cus. The title was all that changed as the performance remained basically the same. Billy Martin's Cole All Star Circus marched around upper New York state from January to March. Talent included Martin's rola bola routine, Christina LaDionne and her poodles, and Phil Chandler doing illusions.

Ray McMahon's Royal American Circus helped raise money for charities in the South in the spring and fall. Tony Bartok was ringmaster and did illusions in the performance. Harry Dubsky's Circus Galaxy appeared in the Midwest and East with son Harry James Dubsky doing his one finger stand, wife Gina with her uncaged leopard, and the Bertini unicycle troupe. The show was an adjunct to Billy Burr's Funorama Carnival at New England fairs in August. Among the acts added to beef up the performance for this run was James Clement and his baby African elephant Moxie. Members of the Dubsky family were also booked on other shows during the year. Rick Legg and Jackie Fugitt's Showtime USA Circus had engagements in Ohio and presumably other states in the spring and fall. Making these dates were Gary Noel, dogs, plate spinning and stilt walking; and Jim and Rickie Bovary, bar act, hand balancing and rolling globe. Legg and wife Jackie did illusions as the Amazing Kelmars, and the clowning was handled by Don Bridwell, Buck Nolan, and Brian Fugitt.

Tommy Lunsford's American Showtime Circus had a ten week run in Florida and Georgia starting on March 29. Among the acts was Ann Pike who presented Gee Gee Engesser's African elephant Roxie, and a miniature horse named Sir James. Announcer Stu Miller also did magic. Bill Brickley's Wonderland Circus Revue toured South Carolina from January 10 to February 4. Performers included Lillianna Hergottova, foot juggling; Ron Dykes, low wire and unicycle; and Paul Dean, aerial cradle. Owner Brickley was the ringmaster and also worked his dog act. Sid Kellner's Great London had some May and November dates in California. On the spring trek were Chester Cable, foot juggling; Yenda Smaha, baboons; Carter Brown, rope spinning; Ray Grant, magic; and David Blasko with his elephant. Announcer Jerry Layne also did vent. On the fall dates Dave Twomey was ringmaster and worked dogs, and Billy Barton did his cloud swing.

The Reynolds Family Circus from Mount Vernon, Illinois had spring and fall gym dates in the Midwest. Making the spring itinerary were Gary Noel, clown and dogs; James Devore, magic; Jim and Rickie Bovary, rola bola and horizontal bars. Owner Bill Reynolds led a five piece band. This one had its first un-

der canvas date at Benton, Illinois from July 1-4 with Tom Demry and his mixed exotics and elephant acts, Kent Clayton family with whip cracking and rope spinning routines, Andy Martello juggling, and Tim Tegge doing the clowning.

Jim Russell's Peanut Circus had dates in the South and Midwest from May through September, some of which may have been at fairs. The Peach Tree Circle City Circus from Dothan, Alabama had a two week run starting October 15 in its home town. Delilah Wallenda who did a slide for life and web number, Tony and Irene Fossett's chimps, Phil and Francine Schacht's elephant Dondi, and Eddie Fossett in a gorilla parody routine were among the acts. The latter was a fixture on school shows. Mel and B. K. Silverlake's Santa Claus Holiday Circus tromped through Indiana around Christmas with

Window card advertising uptown ticket sale for Al Stencell's Century All Star Circus during its summer tour of Eastern Canada. Al Stencell collection.

**BUY YOUR DISCOUNT
CIRCUS TICKETS HERE**

**GLACE BAY
FORUM**

FRI. JUNE 2

4:30 & 8:00
ALL ADVANCE TICKETS AT **Sobey's** ♦

\$5.99 (tax incl.)

AT THE DOOR: ADULTS \$8.50 CHILD \$7.00
(12 years & under)

★ CENTURY ALL STAR CIRCUS ★

**BUY NOW
AND
SAVE**

★ ALL THE FUN, THRILLS
& EXCITEMENT OF THE
BIG TOP ★



**ACROBATIC
& AERIAL
WONDERS**

**MIGHTY ASIAN & AFRICAN
ELEPHANTS**

Roaring
JUNGLE BEASTS

A GALAXY OF
**CIRCUS
STARS**

FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!

Ken Benson and Dick Kohlreiser among the ring talent. The music was provided by a calliope and drums. Gary Strong produced another Christmas show in Louisiana using Eddie Steeples' chimps and bears, Ari Steeples' unicycle and juggling numbers, and Oscar Garcia's balancing and dog routines. Phil Chandler was ringmaster and did magic. A number of other Christmas circuses had short runs in November and December.

Make A Circus, a non-profit troupe, did about fifty days in California during the summer. The one ringer appeared in parks, recreation centers and theaters. The second half of the presentation was devoted to teaching rudimentary circus skills to the children in the audience. Don Hughes had a show called the Soviet Acrobatic Revue on California stages in December; this one was to run May. Hughes also had a troupe called the Chinese Magic Revue on the road which contained circus acts.

Al Stencell, the Barnum of Canada, changed his title to Century All Star Circus from Super Circus International which he had used for the past few seasons. The tour ran from May 2 to June 26 and covered Ontario, the Maritime provinces, and Newfoundland. Acts included Bill Morris and his three elephants, Andre Skarbecki and his eight lions, Johnny Peers' dogs, and Vickie and Gordon Howle with their cradle act. Ari Steeples was the announcer and did rola bola and rode a unicycle during the display.

Marc Verreault had his Le Cirque Universel out in Quebec in the spring with John Pelton and the Don Johnson tigers, Rex Horton's bears, and Chief Black Hawk and two buffalos. Pierre Jean was the ringmaster. Verreault put together another show called Cirque du Plaisir which ran from July 13 through September 3 under a big top owned by the Espana family. Among the acts on this one were Tom Demry with his high school horse Firechip and elephant Anna Louise, Connie Welde and Helga Dam with uncaged leopards and a jaguar, Manuel Congalves on the rola bola, and the Espana family on trampoline. The concessions were handled by old-timer Harry Mills of Mills Bros. Circus fame. George Garden had a show called Sparling Bros. in Ontario for at least two days in May. Nothing else is known of this aggregation.

Circuses were popular at amusement and theme parks. The Circus World Museum had its best attendance since 1976. In late May the new Irvin Feld Exhibit Hall and Visitor Center was dedicated by Kenneth Feld. The new facility, which featured a display on the history of the Ringling brothers and Howard Tibbals' magnificent miniature circus, gave the institution the ability to stay open

throughout the year for the first time. The big top performance featured Jorge Barreda's lions, T. J. Howell's juggling, Lou Ann Jacobs' elephants, Jimmy Williams' clowning, Carla Emerson's and Kathy Hayes' riding, and the Flying Ibarra on the trampoline and in the air. Jaime Ibarra set a world's record for most consecutive triple somersaults during a September 17 performance. His streak stopped at 135 at a Royal Hanneford date in Gallatin, Tennessee in October. The museum's parade in Milwaukee featured the Two Hemisphere bandwagon pulled by a forty horse hitch.

Parc Safari in Hemmingford, Quebec had a wild west show produced by Gaylord Maynard and managed by Gee Gee Engesser. Kay Parker had the band. The 45 minute show was presented from late June to Labor Day. Jim and Heidi Grogan's Dells Crossroad Park in Lake Delton, Wisconsin had a number of circus acts including Ron and Joy Holiday's Cat Dancing routine, the Flying Guttys, the Wainwright living statues, and the Zachary gauchos. Ken Benson, a well known showman, called the pig races. The Catskill Game Farm in upstate New York had Joe and Betty Naud's chimps, Johnny Peers' dogs, and the Woodcock elephants handled by Karen and Chico Williams.

Mark Wilson's Incredible Acrobats of China show had troupes at Disney's Epcot Center and at a park in Ontario. A return engagement at the Ohio State Fair was cancelled by Governor Richard Celeste in protest of China's handling of student protest. Late in the year, Tampa's Busch Gardens featured T. J. Howell juggling and on the unicycle, the Trampoline Guys, and other circus acts. John Robinson's Famous American Circus, owned by Jerry and Sherry Soderquist, produced a show in October at Cypress Gardens in Winter Haven, Florida with Erik Adams' dogs among the acts. The Soderquists also produced circuses for corporations and special events.

The circus was the vehicle for outreach messages for a number of religious groups. This was in marked contrast to a century and a half ago when showmen were in constant conflict with churches or of even a century ago when circus owners deemed it necessary to have endorsements from the clergy, all of which capsulated major changes in American society since that time. The Royal Lichtenstein Circus, founded by Jesuit Priest Nick Weber, was the oldest of this variety of cir-

cusing. After a summer lay-off, its 18th season opened in Southern California in August, playing the West up to the Mississippi River until Christmas when it took a two week break. Appearing outdoors without seats, sidewalls or big top, or in gyms and auditoriums, the seven performers, including ringmaster Weber, exhibited basic circus skills such as rola bola, wire walking, single trapeze, unicycles, juggling, and magic along with a few animal acts such as trained dogs, monkeys and a white stallion named Dan Rice.



Semi trailer used by Tommy Lunsford's American Showtime Circus at the Gibtown Showfolks circus in January. Fred Pfening Jr. photo.

The acts were a means to put across moral and ethical lessons to the audience. No admission was charged, but a free will offering was taken at the end of the performance.

Rev. David Harris had his Circus Kingdom out from June 8 until August 24 in the mid-Atlantic states and the Midwest including almost two weeks at the Wisconsin State Fair. Usually it appeared in school gyms and shopping malls. The show was an outreach effort by the Calvary United Methodist Church of Pittsburgh, and the personnel were for the most part students from Lebanon Valley College in Annsville, Pennsylvania who received college credit for the tour. Churches along the route arranged food and shelter for them. Web, trampoline, clowning, unicycles, rolling globes, tumbling, wire walking and single trapeze were among the turns presented in the ring.

Circus Marantha had summer spot dates in the eastern half of the country, and another at Sarasota in November. While the structure of this one was not ascertained, it appeared it gave benefit performances for Christian schools and homes, and the like. Tino Wallenda Zoppe was a director of the organization

and performed his high wire act in the display. Other showfolk, the Alberto Zoppe family for example, donated their acts for some of the exhibitions. It charged no admission, but took a free will offering.

Very little information was published in the trade press on numerous circuses which were small in either length of route or physical size, or may have been bookings by well known producers using a different title or whose connection was not explicit in news reports. While these spot date shows' impact on the overall industry was minimal, they were nevertheless part of the historical record and a legitimate part of the business.

Circus Berlin had its usual mid-June engagement for the Wheaton, Illinois police under a rented Harold Barnes big top. Among the performers were Bobby and Rosa Gibbs with the Don Johnson baby African elephants, Claude Crumley and his dog act, the Flying Garcias, Billy Barton, and clown Gary Henry. Frank Curry, who had organized the McDonald's Circus in past years, produced two shows in Nashville. The first was a combination circus and ice show in February which was about 60% circus and Las Vegas type acts and about 40% ice skating. Among the circus acts were one of Douglas MacValley's globes of death, Rex Horton's bears, and the Nerveless Nocks on the sway pole. Curry himself was the ringmaster. In September Pepsi Cola sponsored his show under a tent seating 2500 at the Tennessee State Fair. Ring personnel included Lillian Kristensen with her leopards, Delilah Wallenda on the high wire, and the Bill Morris elephants. A former rodeo clown, Curry appeared as Zippo the clown in the production, the first time he had applied grease paint in twenty-two years.

The Great Wallenda Circus appeared in a ball park in Spartanburg, South Carolina on October 21. Among the acts were Barney Loter's comedy horse, Dick Kohlreiser's ponies, the Flying Valentines, James Clement's baby elephant Moxie, Mario Wallenda's globe of death, Debbie Wallenda on the sway pole, and the Great Wallendas on the high wire. Producer Enrico Wallenda also did a sky walk as part of the date. He got into a beef with promoter Mike Kapson, claiming non-payment for the date. At year's end the matter was still in the courts, although all the personnel had been paid for the booking. The Great Wallendas also appeared at theme and

water parks during the summer with their acts.

The Herriott Family Circus had a few performances in Florida in February as a free show for real estate developers. The one ring, open air presentation included the Herriotts' horse and dog acts, and Luciano and Giovanni Anastasini in juggling and risley routines. John and Mary Ruth Herriott spent most of the summer at the Land of Little Horses near Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and at year's end John appeared at the Arabian Nights Dinner Theater in Orlando.

International Circus Royale, produced by Gary Lashinsky and Jerry Lonn, toured Alaska and the Yukon from July 11-23, and appeared in Washington state for one date on the way back. Among the performers making the journey were Yuri Krasnov, hand balancing; Lubov Pisarenkova, aerial rings; Dick Kohlreiser, dogs and ponies; Ari Steeples, rola bola and unicycles; Les Reinands, chimps and unicycles; Ben DeWayne, Bauer elephants; Pierre Spenle, Zerbi-ni tiger act; the Great Wallendas, high wire; and the Flying Espanas. David King was the ringmaster. Playing two and three days stands in Whitehorse, Fairbanks, Soldotna, and Anchorage, the show was quite successful. The three ringer received reams of press attention with numerous front page stories. Lithographs were posted up to 250 miles away in the isolated country.

The Cristiani Circus rode again when Armando and Tino Cristiani produced a show for a veteran's group near Sarasota in March. The indoor, one ring display included Faye Alexander's funny Ford, Gilda Cristiani and her five uncaged leopards, the Bill Bannister family on the perch pole, the Ashtons risley and foot juggling numbers, and three elephants from George Coronas. Dorian Blake was the ringmaster and Wanda Kaye led a five piece band. Bill Hall produced the Wilmington, Delaware Shrine Circus in May with Lillian Kristensen's leopards, and Bobby Moore's elephants among the acts. Hall also had a few other spot dates.

Rudi Jacobi had his Rudy Bros. Circus in Ocala, Florida in an arena in May. If he promoted other dates, their existence didn't come across this desk. Among the acts booked were Larry Gagnon and his black stallion, and the Flying Espanas, who presumably supplied the physical equipment. Veteran Bob Atterbury produced the Lions Club Circus in San Antonio in October. Mike Naughton's Yankee Doodle Circus was in the Northeast during the summer with the Rudi Lenz chimps, the Bettina sisters, and the Ham-

pel family clowns. This one had all the earmarks of a grandstand display for fairs, but confirming evidence was not available. Nothing was known of the Unicorn Circus except it played Starrucca, Pennsylvania on August 19, or of the International Circus Classic which was at Lynden, Washington on September 30-October 1.

Something called Circus Smyrkus from



Jaime Ibarra set a record for most consecutive completed triple somersaults while at the Circus World Museum during the summer. He is shown here doing his slack wire act at the museum's May opening. Sheelagh Jones photo.

Toronto played Hollywood in the early summer for the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Association. The Cream City Semi-Circus which appeared in Milwaukee during the summer was really a mime troupe whose strongest link with the circus was the use of the word in its title. The Circus of Mysteries, produced by Dave Naftalin, appeared in Oakland on December 28. This one was really bizarre as the acts included such non-standard fare as Albanian goat calls, a stripper, a human slime pit, belly dancers, and ritual sacrifice. Old-pro Don Leslie, the tattooed man and sword swallower, was about the tamest number on the bill.

Ringling-Barnum wasn't the only circus to send a unit to the Far East as three other American shows went overseas. Bruno Loyale's Circus Bruno played Micronesia under canvas from November 15 until

January 29, 1990. Many of the locations, Saipan example, were combat sites in World War II. Making the journey were Helen Carpenter, cats; Heidi Wendany, dogs and horses; Los Latinos, tight wire; Joe Long, bears; and the Espanas, flying act. Herbie Weber had the concessions. Sponsored by Shell Oil, the show reported good business, although some logistical problems were experienced.

Paul Kaye's Great American Circus appeared under canvas in Japan from March 18 to May 7 with bookings in seven cities. The talent included Wayne Ragen and the lions and tigers, the Flying Osgoods, two elephants from Don Johnson worked by Ken Jones, and Joe and Bette Naud and their Lancelot Link Chimp number. Tim Tegge was the ringmaster. Stateside, Kaye had the Evansville, Indiana Shrine date in late November. Appearing in the exhibition were Trudy Strong with the John Cueno tigers, Roy Wells with the Cueno elephants, King Arthur and Goldie on the high wire, Jim Hall and his bears, and the Flying Vasquez in their first post-Ringling-Barnum date.

The International Circus of Dreams, produced by Wini McKay and Chester Cable, played four weeks indoors in Manila. Personnel making this trek included John Pelton, Don Johnson tigers; Doug Terranova, Johnson elephants; the Flying Valentines; Yenda Smaha, monkeys; and Robert Seaton, hand balancing. Ed Russell was the ringmaster. Pre-

viously McKay had a show called the Old Time American Circus at the Los Angeles County Fair in Pomona from September 14 to October 1 using Gary and Kari Johnson's elephant, Alex Abadilla on the single trapeze, and Chester Cable's foot juggling. She also had other dates including one for the Malibu, California Lion's Club Chili Cookoff.

The youth circus flourished. Paul Pugh's Wenatchee Youth Circus had side-walled dates in Washington state from June 17 to August 10. Bruce Pfeiffer's Circus of the Kids was part of a performing arts camp in upstate New York during the summer. After the campers learned a few rudimentary circus skills, they went on the road for a few appearances around the area. One of the performers was Nicole Feld, daughter of Ringling-Barnum owner Kenneth Feld. From February through April this one set up shop in southern Florida.

Rob Mermin's Circus Smirkus was another circus camp in Burlington, Vermont. The performers, all between the ages of 10 and 17, showed their stuff under a one ring big top at various New England loca-

tions. At one date, young Soviet performers joined the show as part of a cultural exchange. *People* magazine wrote this one up. While no public performances were given, circus skills were a major part of the curriculum at Camp Winnarainbow, about 200 miles from San Francisco. The camp was headed by Hugh Romney, better known as Wavy Gravey during his salad days as a 1960s counter-culture notable.

Peru, Indiana's Circus City Festival Circus had its 30th anniversary, playing both home and road dates. John Fugate of the Circus Hall of Fame was the ringmaster. The Flying Eagles were grand marshals in the July 22 festival parade. Brian Miser, the act's head, and two other troupe members had started in the business on the Peru show while high school students. Earlier in the year two aerialists from Peru were the only Americans represented in a world circus competition held in Italy.

The Flying High Circus, made up of students at Florida State University, was at Georgia's Callaway Gardens in June

Poster used by International Circus Royale at Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, July 11-12. Debbie Wallenda collection.



Great Wallenda Circus in a baseball park in Spartanburg, South Carolina on October 21. Enrico Wallenda photo.

under a 120 foot round top with three 40foot middle sections. The three ring performance featured flying trapeze, slackwire, juggling, roller skating, cloud swing and perch pole numbers. Sarasota's Sailor Circus gave its annual presentation in late March and early April. It held a 40th reunion on April 1. Among the attenders were six performers from the original 1949 show who participated in a special three and a half hour performance.

Showfolks conducted a number of charity circuses during the year. Kay Rosaire produced the circus held in conjunction with the Sarasota circus parade at the beginning of the year in Roberts Arena. The sixth annual Showmen's Circus was held in Gibsonton, Florida in mid-January. Among those donating their time was Wayne Franzen with his cat act, Tim Frisco with Allan Hill's elephants, John Herriott with a midget horse, and Stu Miller doing magic. Rick Percy directed the band under the Great American big top. The Paul Eagles Luncheon Club Circus was held in Downey, California on April 4 to benefit a children's hospital. John Strong Jr. ate fire and swallowed swords, and Gary and Kari Johnson with their elephant were among the performers appearing there.

A benefit circus was held for popular trouper Charlie Moyer on March 10 in Sarasota. The Jim Nordmark organization put on the performance for Showman's Relief, a benevolent group founded by Norma Frazier. At year's end the Sarasota Showfolks Cir-

cus was held at the Sailor Circus arena. Produced by Serge Coronas with Lucky Larabee as ringmaster, the display included Vincent Von Duke's cage act, and the Allan Hill elephants. Charles Schlarbaum had the band.

Numerous individual circus acts worked at sports shows, trade show, fairs, store promotions, festivals, corporate events, even flea markets. Showrooms in Las Vegas, Lake Tahoe, Reno, and

Atlantic City all had circus acts. A new addition to the Circus Circus line-up in Las Vegas was the Flying Caballeros. Dennis Lacombe, who was featured on Big Apple and Cirque du Soleil in recent seasons, appeared at Trump's Castle in Atlantic City. The Arabian Nights Dinner Theater presented a horse show which included bare back riding, dressage, and chariot races among the numbers. Gaylord Maynard and his horse Chief Paw were featured in the performance.

The New York City Parks and Recreation Department held Circusfest '89 in Central Park on June 10. Performers from Bradshaw's Circus of World Curiosities, a Coney Island sideshow, participated in the event. The Pawnee Bill Wild West marched again when Pawnee Bill State Park in Oklahoma presented a wild west show over Memorial Day weekend which included classic numbers such as the wagon train raid and the stage coach robbery. Former Ringling-Barnum aerial duo Satin was the only American act appearing in February's Monte Carlo Circus Festival.

A television show called Great Circuses of the World ran early in the year, highlighting, among others, the Big Apple and Zerbini shows. ABC cancelled the series after seven of the twelve shows were broadcast. The Circus of the Stars was broadcast by CBS in November. The show was criticized by circus professionals as minimizing and trivializing their talent by giving the impression that television and movie personalities could master the craft in a matter of weeks.

In other circus news, Peru's International Circus Hall of Fame inducted Lou Jacobs, Peggy MacDonald, Jack Smith and Noyelles Burkhart. The Hall of Fame also launched an ambitious capital campaign, and in December announced it had been given the old American Circus Corporation winter quarters in Peru by the Lyman H. Bond family of Indianapolis. Sarasota's

★ ALL NEW AND DIFFERENT ★
THE CIRCUS IS COMING!!

CIRCUS
Royale

FEATURING
 THE GREAT WALLENDAS
 ON THE HIGH TOPS
 AND KONGSLEY &
 LUDY FISHBURN
 DIRECT FROM THE
 ORIGINAL CIRCUS

3 BIG RINGS
 OF EXCITEMENT
 AND FUN!

JULY 11-12
 TUE 7:30 • WED 3:00 & 7:30
TAKHINI ARENA

Tickets at HOUGENS • 305 Main
 sponsored by WHITEHORSE, YUKON C.I.B.

NO INCREASE IN PRICES
 1989

CLOTHES
 TIGERS & PONES
 ELEPHANTS
 JOKES & HUMILIATES
 ACROBATS
 BAREFEELS



Hubert Castle on Ringling in the 1940s.

Ring of Fame honored May Wirth, Harold Alzana, Fay Alexander, the Zacchini brothers, and Dr. J. Y. Henderson. The ceremony was to be held during parade week in early 1990.

Delavan's Clown Hall of Fame inducted its first class. Lou Jacobs, Red Skelton, Mark Anthony, Emmett Kelly, Felix Adler and Otto Griebing were honored at the April 23 ceremony. In other clown news, Clinton, Iowa held Felix Adler Days in June, and the Emmett Kelly Jr. Collectors Society held a birthday party for Kelly in Atlanta in November at which Count Nicholas was emcee.

The Barnum Museum in Bridgeport reopened on June 10 following a three year, \$3.5 million renovation and expansion. The work of Fred Johnson, the great sideshow banner painter, was displayed in the State of Illinois Art Gallery in Chicago from July through September. Circus Kirk held a 20 year reunion on September 1 and 2 at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Among the speakers was former staffer Jim Kieffer. A group was formed late in the year to buy the Al Ringling Theater in an effort to preserve it. Also in Baraboo, Chappie Fox was the recipient of the Distinguished Service Award presented by the local Jaycees.

The Ringling Circus Galleries of the Ringling Museum opened in January to mixed reviews. The main feature was an exhibit on Tom Thumb who was only marginally connected to the circus. John Ringling was back in the news fifty-three



Billy McCabe on Cristiani Bros. in 1958.

years after his death when Henry Ringling North asked the Ringling Museum-trustees to set aside a permanent burial site on the museum grounds for Ringling, his wife Mabel, and Ida Ringling North. It was disclosed that John and Mabel Ringling's bodies were moved from Fairview, New Jersey, where they had been stored since 1936, to a Port Charlotte, Florida crypt in 1987. The trustees agreed to the request on the condition that all the Ringling descendants settle differences whether Ida North should be buried with her brother and sister-in-law. This latest chapter of Ringling wrangling was unresolved at year's end with North threatening to bury the three in Baraboo if the rest of the family didn't support his wishes. A group was formed in Sarasota which purchased the Jomar, John Ringling's private car, with the intention of restoring it.

No season's review would be complete without the annual Dick Garden update. In brief, he settled some of the cases against him, faced new charges, and filed personal bankruptcy. He was ordered to refrain from activities requiring a license under the Animal Welfare Act for fifteen years which put him out of the menagerie business, and banned from raising money in Maryland for life.

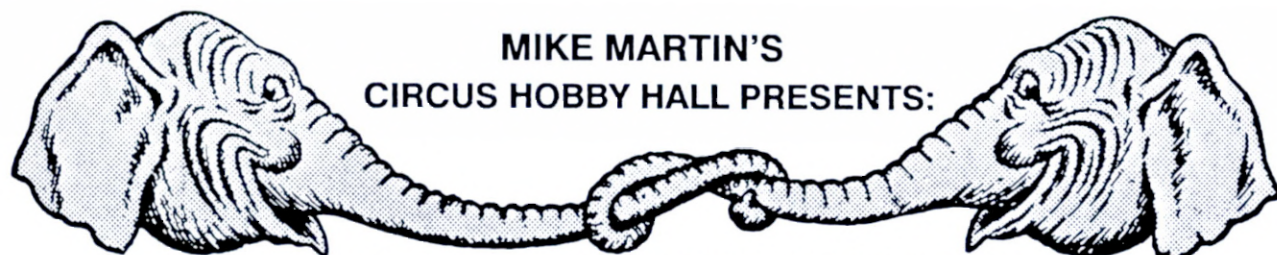
Deaths during the year included Bumpy Anthony, old-time clown; Arthur Barrett, former Polack concession manager; Hubert Castle (nee Hal Smith), great slack wire artist; Zella Wintermute Hall, member of the Wintermute circus family and widow of showman Frank Hall; Mike Aria, bear trainer; Gottlieb J. Fischer, former Ringling-Barnum side show giant; Billy McCabe, well known clown with Cristiani, Vargas and other shows; Gil G. Gray, veteran circus owner; Pat Anthony, cat trainer who learned his trade at Jungland under the GI Bill of Rights; Sara Zoppe, retired rider; Charles Moyer, band leader; Peter Mortensen, husband of Carin Cristiani of the Cristiani elephant act; Ed-



Bumpy Anthony on Cole Bros. in 1935.

die Zacchini, producer; Alfred Yacopi, former Ringling-Barnum star; and Clifford E. Vargas, showman.

This overview attempts to be as comprehensive as possible and to whatever degree that goal has been reached is in large part do to the many people, both show folk and show fan, who have made me the recipient of a steady flow of information concerning the 1989 circus season. They made an immense contribution, and I thank them all. They are: Ernest Albrecht, Chris Audibert, Sid Bowers, Carl Berger, Bill Biggerstaff, Joe Bradbury, Arnold Brito, Jerry Cash, Tex Copeland, Fred Dahlinger, Jim Dunwoody, Bill Elbirt, Frank Felt, Bobby Gibbs, John Goodall, James Hall, Deborah Haney, Jim Harshman, Al House, George Hubler, Don James, Sheelagh Jones, Larry Kent, Charles Koehler, Jim Lawrence, John Lenker, Daniel Lyon, Dave Orr, Jerry Overstreet, Greg Parkinson, Tom Parkinson, Fred Pfenning Jr., John Polacsek, J. Scott Pyles, Richard Reynolds, Howard Rower, L. A. Sadler, Sol Salzer, Ron Sanford, Walter Searfoss, Mike Sporrer, John Still, Leroy Sweetland, Frank Thompson, Debbie Wallenda, Bill Whitney, and Warren Wood. My apologies if I have missed anyone. As always, Don Marcks' *Circus Report* was indispensable in my research. Issues of *Amusement Business*, *Showfolks of Sarasota Newsletter*, *White Tops*, and various CFA top and tent publications were also useful.



MIKE MARTIN'S
CIRCUS HOBBY HALL PRESENTS:

CENTER RING VIDEOS

THE GREAT SARASOTA CIRCUS PARADE 1990!

ENJOY ALL THE FUN AND EXCITEMENT OF THE 5TH ANNUAL CIRCUS CELEBRATION!

BANDS!
CIRCUS WAGONS!
TRAINED ANIMALS!
STAR PERFORMERS!

PLUS: HIGHLIGHTS OF THE HUGE FLEA MARKET
AND SHOWGROUND ACTIVITIES!

*FOR THOSE WHO MISSED IT,
THIS IS JUST LIKE BEING THERE!*

VHS or
BETA

\$25.00 P.P.

"THE CIRCUS SCENE 1989"

SEE:

2 FULL
HOURS

\$25.00
P.P.

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS OF

VHS or
BETA

- KELLY-MILLER
- CARSON & BARNES
- FRANZEN BROTHERS
- BARABOO MUSEUM CIRCUS
- CULPEPPER/MERRIWEATHER
- MILWAUKEE PARADE CIRCUS

IN
COLOR

THIS TAPE WAS A BIG HIT AT SARASOTA'S PARADE FESTIVAL!

- 10 PG CATALOG, LOADED WITH MATERIALS FOR ANY COLLECTOR, SENT WITH ALL ORDERS •

CIRCUS HOBBY HALL
11950 107TH AVE. N., LARGO, FL 34648

Short Sketches of Former Shows

Maynard Bros. Circus Season of 1936

By Joseph T. Bradbury

Several weeks before the 1936 season began the *Billboard* frequently mentioned the name Maynard. It was duly noted that two shows bearing that name were going on the road. Both would be new. Much more prominent in *Billboard* was Ken Maynard's Diamond K Ranch Wild West being framed in the Los Angeles area. It was owned by the well known and popular motion star and was to move on fifteen or more railroad cars. The other show to use the Maynard name was being organized in Springfield, Massachusetts by Harry A. Maynard and his brother Albert. It was to be a small motorized circus using the title of Maynard Bros., a true brother's outfit. This little New England circus lasted only about three weeks.

The first public news of Maynard Bros. came in the form of an advertisement in the February 15, 1936 *Billboard* which read: "Want general agent, aerial acts, concert feature, sideshow features, boss canvasman who can drive. Musicians and clowns. State all in letter, Maynard Bros. Circus, 55 Adams Street, Springfield, Massachusetts."

A Maynard Bros. Circus letterhead in the Pfening Archives dated February 28, 1936 from Harry Maynard to Bill Kasiska listed Harry A. Maynard's home address as 55 Adams Street and the winter quarters at the rear of 926 Columbus Avenue in Springfield. Maynard wrote: "Enclosed you will find letterhead of Maynard Bros. Circus and regret to say I can find no use [for] you as I have all the help I need in that line."

"Hoping some day you may be proud to own one of the enclosed letterheads. Thanking you kindly for your interest."

The March 14 *Billboard* carried a short article which said Maynard Bros. One Ring Circus was being organized in Springfield. The show had two light

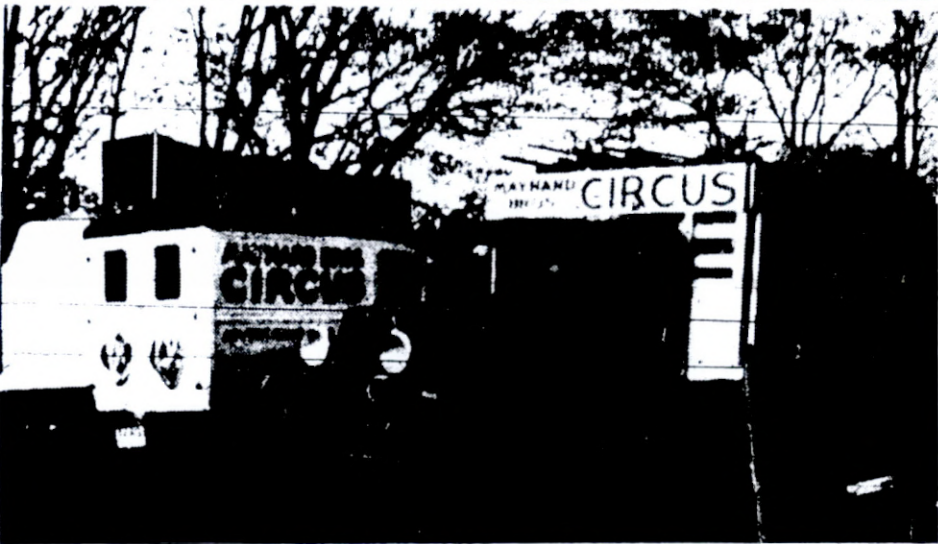
plants, a four pole big top, seats and four trucks. Stock consisted of six ponies, two mules, two high school horses, five trained goats and some pigeons. Five men were in quarters painting and taking care of the stock.

Unfortunately this was the only information giving any details of the physical equipment. A later note at the time of the show's closing mentioned six trucks which is probably more correct. The color scheme for the vehicles was white and probably lettered in red. A sideshow and cookhouse were carried and a wild west type aftershow was presented.

It is doubtful the performance was presented in a one ring format using a four center pole big top. This is assuming all of the early information was correct. It

This photo of Maynard Bros. Circus appeared in the May 20, 1936 *New London, Connecticut Day*. Although of poor quality it is the only known photo of the show. Clifford Beebe collection.

NORTH STONINGTON'S FIRST CIRCUS GETS INTO TROUBLE



would have been possible to have a four pole top using one large center middle piece and two very short side middles, but this is unlikely. Probably the Maynard Bros. big top was about a 60 foot with three 30s or 20s in a three ring layout.

No information available mentions an elephant. The Charles Davis files in the Wes Herwig collection do not list an elephant on the show. Nor is one listed in the Woodcock files. Likewise there is no evidence the show had a wild animal caged menagerie.

Small motorized circuses of the mid 1930s using six trucks also carried eight or ten privately owned vehicles, such as house trailers and trucks with living quarters.

There was a short notice in the April 14 *Billboard* noting that Hal Savage had written from New Bedford, Massachusetts that he had contracted his slide for life act with Maynard for the coming season. He was to join the show on April 11.

The show, although not mentioning the Maynard title, had an ad in the April 18 *Billboard*. It read: "Wanted for motorized circus, fast tumbling act, good wire act doing two or more. Bar performers, riding act, prop boys, wild west concert, trap drummer, good pit shows. Jerry Small, William Kane, Texas Joe Clark write. For sale-grab, popcorn, ball game, custard, palmist. Ted Worth, 125 Chestnut Street, Springfield, Massachusetts."

The Ted Worth mentioned in the ad was not identified but the Chestnut Street address later was identified as one used by Harry Maynard, the senior partner of the show. Worth may have been superintendent or assistant manager. The concessions offered for sale indicates a carnival connection. No background material on the Maynards has been found but a good possibility exists they had a carnival background, as was the case with the owners

of another motorized circus, Bockus & Kilonis, which was being framed in Manchester, New Hampshire in the spring of 1936.

An early April *Billboard* reported that New England roads were in bad condition due to the worst flooding the area had ever seen. The restoration of the highways would take some time. Owners of motorized circuses and carnivals intending to play New England towns were advised to arrange their itineraries for later in the season. Rhode Island was the only state in the region to escape the fury of the floods. It was noted that rail shows would not be adversely affected as the rapid restoration of road beds was then under way. New England was not the only section of the country suffering from flooded rivers and streams in the spring of 1936.

Maynard Bros. opened the 1936 season at Windsor Locks, Connecticut on April 27. After a Sunday off for travel the show next played Southington on the 29th and Bristol on the 30th. All of the few known dates the show played were in the state of Connecticut.

This feature on Maynard Bros. Circus appeared in the 1936 edition of the *Circus Magazine*. Pfening Archives.

The *Billboard* carried no opening review of the show's performance. Fortunately the Maynard show used the services of *Circus Magazine*, *Wild West and Animal Review*, a publication sold to circuses and carnivals of the period. The name of the show was imprinted on a common cover and carried a few pages on the show featured as well as a number of others. Due to the short life of the Maynard show no actual copies of the publication carrying that title have been located, and it is necessary to use the text from another show. A copy of the 1936 magazine carrying the Martin Bros. Trained Animal Circus on the cover in the Pfening Archives contains pages on Martin Bros., Seils-Sterling, Lewis Bros., Bob Morton, Conroy Bros., Joe B. Webb, Barnett Bros., Atterbury Bros., Silver Bros., Kuhn, Jethro Almond, Bailey Bros., Famous Robbins, Vanderburg Bros., Robinson Bros., Barney Bros. and Maynard Bros. circuses, as well as the Rubin & Cherry, Snapp, F. H. Bee, Al C. Hansen, Dennert & Knepp, Corey and Kaus carnivals. The Maynard program was listed along with several paragraphs of general text describing the new show. The Maynard copy offered some information of interest but much of it was typical press agent hype. The only Maynard illustration showed Mrs. Emma Zocco, an iron jaw performer.

After the stand at Bristol, Connecticut on April 30 no dates have been found

MAYNARD BROS.

MOTORIZED CIRCUS

THERE is nothing quite like starting off the Circus season with a brand new coat of paint. And the Maynard Bros. have painted their trucks a fresh coat of white. The newly motorized outfit looks very resplendent as it moves over the highways of New England.

A hundred and fifty performers make up the Maynard personnel. These include acrobats, animal trainers, clowns, horse riders, bucking horse riders and aerialists. Happy in their gaily painted trucks, the show moves into New England bringing the thrill of a lifetime to the youngsters as well as to the oldsters. For years the Maynard Circus has had the reputation for clean, wholesome performances.

The Flint's Concert Band, which boasts of a repertory of both classical and popular selections, will entertain before and between acts. They will even be glad to play your request numbers, making the performance something of a concert as well as a circus.



Mrs. Emma Zocco, spectacular iron jaw and performer with the Maynard Bros. Circus.

PROGRAM

- DISPLAY NO. 1**
Capt. Pierce and his famous pony trio drill. This performance will please both the youngsters and the grown ups.
- DISPLAY NO. 2**
The Dolly Sisters, Pearl and Pauline, will thrill you in their sensational aerial act.
- DISPLAY NO. 3**
The famous European horse "Red Queen" will perform in her fast and furious tricks, featured by her trainer Capt. Pierce.
- DISPLAY NO. 4**
Madame Emma Zocco, the daring, charming performer, will feature her famous Iron Jaw, Spanish Web, and aerial acts.
- DISPLAY NO. 5**
"Cheeko" Davis, the world's foremost balancing table clown. He is the funniest, daringest clown known the world over.
- DISPLAY NO. 6**
Featuring the Flying Dickens Bros. trapeze and bar acts—thrilling, daring, aerial stunts.
- DISPLAY NO. 7**
The original Pete, the only unridable mule in circus today Try and ride him. Let the clown show you how. Featured by Chester Wright and George Chandler.
- DISPLAY NO. 8**
Col. Maynard featuring his famous three Arabian ponies. It took several months of hard work to train these ponies. The kiddies will be thrilled at this performance.
- DISPLAY NO. 9**
Slide for life from the highest pole in the Big Top to the ground. Several other aerial acts and great thrills.
- DISPLAY NO. 10**
Now we have the pleasure of featuring Mlle. Lilia Keefe, the famous girl horse rider, riding Harry, Dancing King of the ring. This performer makes her debut with this circus.
- DISPLAY NO. 11**
Featuring "Sally" the famous comical mule with assistance of clowns.
- DISPLAY NO. 12**
Featuring Capt. Pierce with his four famous wire-walking mountain goats and several different stunts you must see to believe.
- DISPLAY NO. 13**
Here they are—The Four Still Bros. Clowns—plenty of laughs, roars, when you see these four humorous clowns.
- DISPLAY NO. 14**
Featuring "Baby Queen" the dancing pony and her pal "Deck" the famous show dog.
- DISPLAY NO. 15**
Clowns raring to do their stuff will entertain young and old with their tricks during the whole performance. These men are especially trained clowns and employ the most original jokes known. It took years of experience to develop such astonishingly well-trained performers.
- DISPLAY NO. 16**
Closing with the European Riding Act Supreme—The Riding Maynards.

until May 16 when the show was in Mystic, Connecticut, the final stand of the short three week season. Maynard was scheduled to play North Stonington, Connecticut on May 18. The trucks and personnel moved to that town but the show did not set up. Evidently all funds had run out and an interesting drama was acted out. It will be told from two sources, the *Billboard* and local newspapers. The May 30 *Billboard* carried an article headlined: "Maynard Bros. in sheriff's hands."

It was dated Westerly, Rhode Island, May 23 and read as follows: "The Maynard Bros. Circus, motorized, blew up at North Stonington, Connecticut, five miles from here, on Monday (18) and the show is now in the hands of Deputy Sheriff Staunton S. Green.

"According to a story in the *Westerly Sun*, the owners of the show tried to 'pull a fast one' on the thirty performers, musicians, freaks etc. by sneaking out during the early hours of Tuesday morning without paying the help, in fact it is said they hadn't been paid for three weeks. The employees halted the morning proceedings until the arrival of Sheriff Green and attorney F. Gallagher and an attachment was placed on the circus properties. The attachment was placed until the owners could get enough money to pay off the help. Up to this time they have not done so."

A week later the *Billboard* reported, "among those who were with Maynard Bros. Circus which folded recently at North Stonington, Connecticut, were Mr. and Mrs. Ed Simpson, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Zocco, Dare-devil Ivan Mosely, Cheeko Davis, Winky Anderson, William C. H. Lamb, Victor O'Weise, Ted Worth, Edward LaFond, James Gunn, E. P. Flint, Roy Lewis, Al Boatman, Nolan Cargile, Harry Seavet and Bob Oliver."

The Maynard matter made news for the next couple of weeks in the *Billboard*. The June 13 issue said that a judgement for \$517 against the property of Maynard Bros. Circus attached by the employees for arrears of pay was filed May 18. The equipment which had been stored, was to be sold to satisfy the judgement. The wild and domestic animals belonging to the circus were not included in the attachment. They had been on the farm of Curtis Eccleston until May 27 when they were taken to the show's headquarters at Springfield, Massachusetts.

Another account said that the stranded Maynard personnel were shown hospitality by local citizens as well as circus fans

living in the area. Mrs. Ethel Moosey, proprietor of the Dew Drop Inn, her sisters and parents provided food for twenty-two troupers who attached the show. Their inn was the home of show people who extended their thanks to the Moosey family and the fans.

The *White Tops* identified two of the circus fans as Bugs Raymond of Norwich, Connecticut and CFA national secretary Walter M. Buckingham and commented that they showed the true spirit of the or-

chain across the only exit from a lot on the farm of Curtis Eccleston, and prevented the management of the show from taking wild animals and equipment from the grounds in what they described as a plot to break up the show and have them stranded.

"The chain stood in a drenching rain for several hours while Edward Saford and William C. H. Lumb arranged with attorney John H. Gallagher of Pawcatuck to draw up a writ of attachment and then for

Deputy Sheriff Stanton S. Greene of Pawcatuck to serve it, as a means of collecting back wages.

"Has everything but money.

"In all its history, North Stonington has never been honored with the presence of a circus, but one is here now, big top and all. It's really a great show, and appears to have

everything except money, according to Sheriff Greene, who intends to keep it here until the later is obtained.

"According to the story told Mr. Gallagher, the circus left headquarters in Springfield (Massachusetts) April 26 and opened the next day in Windsor Locks, Connecticut. Things seemed to be going well, the performers said, but all of a sudden the advance billing was cut down from a week to three days and when the show played Mystic Saturday, it was billed only 24 hours in advance. Early Sunday morning it moved on to North Stonington without any billing.

"Performers said they spent most of Sunday looking for Harry Maynard, the senior partner, whose whereabouts had not been known to them for several days. Unable to locate him, they made demands on his brother, Albert Maynard, for back wages. Some had been paid one week, they said, while others had not been paid during the three weeks that the show had been on the road. Maynard is said to have promised to see what he could do.

"Performers get suspicious.

"The performers said they began to fear that something was amiss Monday morning when no orders were received for the big top to go up, which means there was to be no performance in North Stonington.

"All retired to their tents expecting to move on yesterday morning to Taftville. About 10:30 Monday night, however the performers claim that heads of the show, with several new drivers attempted to take the equipment back to headquarters in Springfield.

"One of the performers, awakened by

ADVERTISING

TICKET

**ADMIT
ONE**

MAYNARD BROS. CIRCUS

Leave Lithographs Up Until Inspector Calls

—Lithograph Ticket Order—

Have this Order always on hand so as to cause no delay to Inspector when he calls

LITHOGRAPH TICKET AGENT: _____, 19____

You will please give Mr. _____

_____ Ticket for privilege of placing _____ Lithographs in his windows at his place, No. _____ Street

10c Service Charge to be Paid on Each Admission

Advertising ticket used by the Maynard show in 1936. Pfening Archives.

ganization when they took food to performers and workmen of the Maynard show who were stranded in North Stonington.

In 1987 Bob Sabia wrote the author and sent a couple of newspaper photostats concerning the demise of the Maynard show. Sabia suggested that I contact Cliff Beebe who lived in Mystic, Connecticut, near North Stonington in hope he might offer to further research the local newspaper files.

Beebe not only graciously did that but also made contact with local residents who recalled the Maynard affair some fifty years ago. Both the *Day* published in New London and the *Westerly Sun* in Westerly, Rhode Island carried stories, some of which were also quoted in *Billboard* articles.

One of the longest and most informative articles came in the May 20 New London *Day*. It also ran a photo picturing several of the Maynard trucks. This is the only Maynard photo found. It seems Maynard Bros. was scheduled to be the first circus ever to play North Stonington, at least according to the newspaper writer.

The article was headlined "North Stonington has first circus but alas, there's no money to pay performers." The story written by A. Morgan Stewart read as follows: "During the height of the severe electrical storm late Monday night and early yesterday morning, a band of more than thirty workers, musicians, performers and sideshow men connected with Maynard Bros. Circus formed a human

an unruly goat, noted the suspicious actions of new men on the grounds and quickly awakened other workers and performers. Disregarding the drenching rain the human chain was formed across the only exit from the lot by Mrs. Edward Simpson, tight wire artist and Dare-devil Ivan Mosely.

"Tightwire artist in tight spot.

"While the chain was being formed a big truck carrying the lighting plant made for the exit, according to the performers, and stopped within a matter of inches of Mrs. Simpson. Saford and Lumb called state police at Groton barracks and troupers George Seidell and James Reardon hurried to the scene. They told the performers there was nothing they could do as the case was one calling for civil action. They stood by, however, to see that Mrs. Simpson was not hit.

"It was two o'clock yesterday morning when Sheriff Greene went to the lot with the writ of attachment, but Mrs. Simpson, with other performers and musicians, was still standing in the exit, and the wild animal trucks were lined up with motors running.

"Mr. Greene appointed Adam Kuchavich of North Stonington as keeper of the property days, and Harry Buckley as keeper nights.

"Animals must eat.

"Today the circus remains on the Eccleston lot. Workers and performers are passing the time away at Dew Drop Inn across the road, and animals are grazing on the Eccleston farm.

"Many of the show people are without funds, but other troupers are helping them out.

"Alfred Maynard left early yesterday for Springfield to see if he can raise enough money to release the attachment. He had not returned to the grounds early today.

"The amount due the workers and performers range from \$4 to \$125."

The *Day* in its May 23 edition continued the Maynard saga with an article headlined "Circus animals not attached and it's problem to get Feed; fat lady fast losing weight." The story read: "Things have changed from bad to worst for the more than thirty workers, performers and musicians of the Maynard Bros. Circus, who forced the show to make a 'holdover' engagement in North Stonington early Tuesday morning by attaching the equipment for back wages.

"Yesterday Sheriff Stanton S. Greene of Pawcatuck had all the trucks and equipment driven to Pawcatuck for storage in a garage until such time as disposition is made on the writ of attachment.

"The wild animals and live stock of the show were not included in the attachment proceedings, so the amusement people

WESTERLY FRIDAY, May 15 Afternoon and Evening OAK HILL FARM off Liberty Street

BOCKUS & KILONIS
WILD ANIMAL CIRCUS
700 ANIMALS
25 CLOWNS
WORLD'S BEST WILD ANIMAL CIRCUS
20 ACRES OF TENTS
Admission Adults 50c Children 25c
12:00 AND 8:00 PM DAILY

Bockus & Kilonis Circus newspaper ad for Westerly, Rhode Island. The show was near North Stonington at the time of the Maynard debacle. Paul Horsman collection.

and workers find themselves on location without equipment, but with a lot of live stock and themselves to provide for without funds.

"While the Maynard brothers are still out trying to raise funds, their employees remain in their privately owned tent village on the location leased from G. Curtis Eccleston for a performance last Monday.

"Last night the circus band, under the direction of bandmaster E. P. Flint, gave a public concert on the grounds.

"The plight of the show is no end of worry to the performers, stranded here for nearly a week now. It was pointed out at the grounds yesterday that Sadie, the fat lady with the sideshow, is losing three or four pounds a day, and may not be able to get another position.

"Affairs of the workers and performers are being handled by attorney John F. Gallagher of Pawcatuck."

The *Westerly Sun* published in nearby

Westerly, Rhode Island also covered the Maynard story in its May 20 edition. The story was headed "Stonington Sheriff suddenly finds circus on his hands. Deputy Stanton S. Greene called in when failure to pay help leads to mutiny in the ranks of Maynard Bros. in North Stonington. Deputy Sheriff Greene has a full size circus, an assorted collection of sideshow freaks and a brass band on his hands today and doesn't know what to do with them all because of a mutiny in the ranks of the Maynard show in North Stonington Monday night.

"The Sheriff's troubles started when the owners of the show tried to 'pull a fast one' on the thirty performers, musicians and freaks by sneaking out during the early hours of Tuesday morning without paying the help, in fact they hadn't been paid up for three weeks. The employees halted the moving proceedings until the arrival of Greene and attorney John F. Gallagher and an attachment was placed on the circus properties.

"The attachment was placed until the owners could beg or borrow enough money to pay off the help but up until noon today they hadn't paid. Rations are low at the circus and Sheriff Greene will have some hungry animals to feed if the owners do not get results very quickly. The sideshow freaks

will also have to be cared for and the sheriff does not relish the thought of feeding Sadie, the fat lady.

"Apparently trouble has been brewing in the circus ranks for some time. The employees claim that they have received no pay for three weeks. On Saturday the show went on to Mystic but the attendance was disappointing and the owners failed to even cover expenses. According to the booking agent they were scheduled to perform in North Stonington on Monday but after camping there all day the workers received no orders to put up the tents, and their suspicions were aroused. In their own words the 'thought there was something in the wind.'

"They retired on Monday night but shortly after 9:30 pm one of the performers was awakened by the roar of the trucks and aroused the others. They discovered that the owners were attempting to clear out the six trucks and equipment and leave them stranded in the village.

"Quickly forming a living chain the scantily clad workers stood across the only exit from the field, preventing the trucks from leaving until the arrival more

than an hour later of attorney Gallagher and Sheriff Greene. An attachment was placed on the property of Harry and Albert Maynard of Springfield, Massachusetts who owned the circus. Food is being given the stranded circus people by a Norwich member of the Circus Fans, a national organization of well to do men which works throughout the country for the benefit of circuses. According to the story of one of the veteran performers of the Maynard show, the members of the Circus Fans are all wealthy men who spend their summer vacations traveling under the big top. The Norwich man is a director of the Thames American Trust Company."

Too bad that today, fifty four years later all CFA members are not that rich and have as leisurely summers as suggested in this newspaper account. It is clear that organized circus fans had a good reputation with show people in those days.

The following day, May 21, the *Westerly Sun* carried another article describing the Maynard situation. It had a long heading: "Sheriff Greene getting grayer every hour. Stonington deputy finds new circus responsibilities exacting. Help await pay. Sadie, fat lady, in danger of being transferred to skeleton tent." The article read: "A few more gray hairs were evident on the head of Deputy Sheriff Greene today as the wage trouble between the owners and troupers of the Maynard circus remained unsettled. At noon today the sheriff still was the boss of the show at its North Stonington stand because the owners had failed to show up with back wages as they promised. Attorney Gallagher expressed the opinion that the trouble would be straightened out this afternoon.

"In the meantime the enforced diet is having a bad effect on the sideshow performers. If the trouble is not settled quickly Sadie the fat lady will be out of a job for she is losing weight at a rapid rate. Ted Reed, chief barker and head man of the sideshow, practiced his sleight of hand tricks this morning but despite his best efforts he could not produce a much desired pot roast or even a loaf of bread from the silk hat. Tom the tattooed man must have read the handwriting on the wall for he left the show Saturday night just before the trouble started.

"One of the disgruntled troupers was loud in his condemnation this morning of the Maynard brothers for the 'fast one' they pulled on their employees.

"The troupier explained he was a gentleman of leisure and had joined the circus only to wear out his old clothes. 'I had two of everything when I joined the show on April 27th,' he said, 'and now I have one of nothing.'

"He expressed the belief that the own-

Tomorrow ONE DAY ONLY

DAVIS FIELD
BOSTON POST ROAD
Corner Clark Lane

Gorman Bros. Circus played New London, Connecticut May 23, while Maynard was having its troubles in North Stonington. Pfening Archives.

ers had been making money in all of the towns and were just awaiting such an opportunity to jump out without paying the help. He said that he had driven Harry Maynard to the Western Union office each night after the show and it was his belief that his boss had been wiring money back to Springfield. 'Every show has a Houdini,' he continued, 'and Harry Maynard was ours. After collecting the money he did a disappearing act each night.'

"The booking agent also came in for criticism. 'He had been booking us in cow pastures, sawdust piles, holes in the ground, backyard places and garbage

dumping grounds during the past two weeks,' our informer continued.

"Apparently there is internal strife in the ranks of the workers for it was disclosed that a certain group termed as 'the unholy five' was using the only stove owned by the show and as a result the others could get no hot water to wash up or shave.

"The circus carries an assortment of trained dogs, ponies, goats and horses and each performer is a combination of laborer, musician, clown, artist, and dog trainer.

"Albert Maynard, youngest of the brothers, made a trip to New York City in an effort to raise the necessary funds. He had not communicated with Sheriff Greene up to noon today but it is expected that he will sometime before night.

"The Sheriff is undecided as to what he will do if no settlement is forthcoming. According to law he should store the attached property until the matter is settled in court, but his two day sojourn with the circus has stirred his roving blood. Friends say, and it would be no surprise if he took to the road as ringmaster."

No doubt many readers have encountered the "disgruntled circus troupier" and can relate to the often heard "mouthings" in the past. The description of the booking agent and selection of lots is particularly familiar.

The drama ended a short time later when the Maynard Bros. Circus was sold to Coleman Bros. Shows, a motorized carnival which maintained winter quarters in Middleton, Connecticut. The exact date and terms of the sale are not known. It was reported in the *Billboard* in an article dated June 20 that the sale had recently taken place, but no further details were given. Presumably the funds from the sale enabled the Maynard brothers to pay the sum owed to the employees for back pay and get all attachments released. Nothing further was published about the activities of the Maynards. Their circus lasted only three weeks.

The other Maynard show, Ken Maynard's Wild West, had a similar short life, in fact it didn't play as many stands as that of the Springfield Maynards. Both shows seemed to have the same problem under funding just not enough shekles in the sack to keep going. Harry and Albert Maynard for sure suffered a bad press and their side of the story was never told. Possibly their intention in attempting to move the equipment from the North Stonington lot was not as it appeared to the show employees. Regardless of their intent the show troupers, it is assumed, were finally paid all due them, but the Maynards had to dispose of their show to do it.

Coleman Bros. carnival is still on the

road and has been on the scene in New England, particularly in Connecticut, since at least 1923, possibly even longer. Wes Herwig feels it may have been on the road for seventy-five years. Herwig's notes that the Colemans, after obtaining the Maynard show in 1936, kept it intact and installed it on the back end of their midway, but it was short-lived even there. Final disposition of the show is not known but probably the vehicles and as much of the physical property as practical was absorbed into the carnival. Cliff Beebe while researching information for this article visited the Coleman Bros. show on their lot during a stand in Connecticut in 1988 and contacted the present generation of Colemans hoping to find someone who might have direct information on the purchase of Maynard Bros. Unfortunately none of them knew anything about it.

Although the natives living in North Stonington were deprived of seeing the Maynard Bros. performances they would have had ample opportunity to see a couple of other circuses within easy driving distance at about the same time as Maynard's scheduled appearance. Cliff Beebe discovered that the Bockus & Kilo-

nis Wild Animal Circus played Westerly, Rhode Island, only five miles away, on May 15, 1936. Beebe also learned that Gorman Bros. Circus, considerably larger than Maynard or Bockus & Kilonis, played New London, Connecticut on May 23.

The climax of Beebe's investigation in North Stonington came when he made contact with and interviewed on two occasions Curtis Moosey, proprietor of the Dew Drop Inn located on Route 2 at North Stonington. Both the Moosey name and Dew Drop Inn were mentioned in *Billboard* accounts of the shows folding. Mr. Moosey said his family had owned the Dew Drop since it was founded in 1918. As a young man in 1936 he still had sharp memories of the Maynard drama and was able to point out the farm field across from the Inn. Little has changed in the passing years. The Eccleston farm mentioned in the *Billboard* and newspaper accounts is bordered by a stone wall adjacent to the main road. The entire rustic setting remained virtually unchanged and a narrow barway through the walls could still be seen until 1989 when condos were built on the land. This is the place where

the Maynard troupers, with their hands joined prevented the trucks from leaving.

Mr. Moosey recalls there were two places across the street from his establishment where the Maynard property was parked. Some vehicles were parked in a barn which was later destroyed in the 1938 hurricane, while others were a short distance away.

Not all of the performers departed immediately when the matter was finally resolved. Moosey remembers that one of the show's wild west cowboys, named Hamm, stayed for a while. He had a black and white jumping horse. In the performance the horse, a true and magnificent jumper, would jump over a Hudson automobile. Also staying behind was a knife thrower and his wife. They remained in their house trailer for about six months. Moosey often saw them practicing their craft out of doors.

When asked if the Maynard show had an elephant Moosey responded without hesitation that he had not seen one.

The author wishes to thank Curtis Moosey, Bob Sabia, Wes Herwig and especially Clifford Beebe for their help on this article.

Award Winning Book. Western Writers of America-SPUR Award Finalist

Red Wagons and White Canvas A Story of the Mollie Bailey Circus

By Marj Gurasich

Almost everyone has a fantasy of running away to join a traveling circus. Jeremiah Colquitt did just that and became a protege of Mollie Bailey. Known affectionately by several generations of Texans as "Aunt Mollie," she ran the famous Mollie A. Bailey Show for almost half a century. She called it "a Texas show for Texas people." But the author's biography of this colorful lady entrepreneur is for everyone who loves the circus. The author, who grew up in Gary, Indiana, and now lives in Houston, not only researched the life of Mollie Bailey but also the traveling circus of that turn-of-the-century era. While the story reads like a novel, the author is faithful in depicting this storybook circus queen. Even Jeremiah, whom Mollie called "Cotton," had a real life counterpart. 5 3/4 x 8 3/4, illustrated, glossary of circus terms and extensive bibliography.

To order: Send \$11.00
(including postage and handling)

To:
MARJ GURASICH
RT. 1, BOX 410
WALLIS, TEXAS 77485



Do you have our current "D"
catalog?

If not you are missing out.

We carry the best
in "HO" and "O"
Circus Kits, Books, Posters
And collectables.
We've got something for
everybody.

Send \$3.00 to:

CIRCUS STAR SUPPLIES
3037 Grass Valley Hwy.
Auburn, CA 95603

HAGENBECK-WALLACE CIRCUS

Season of 1934

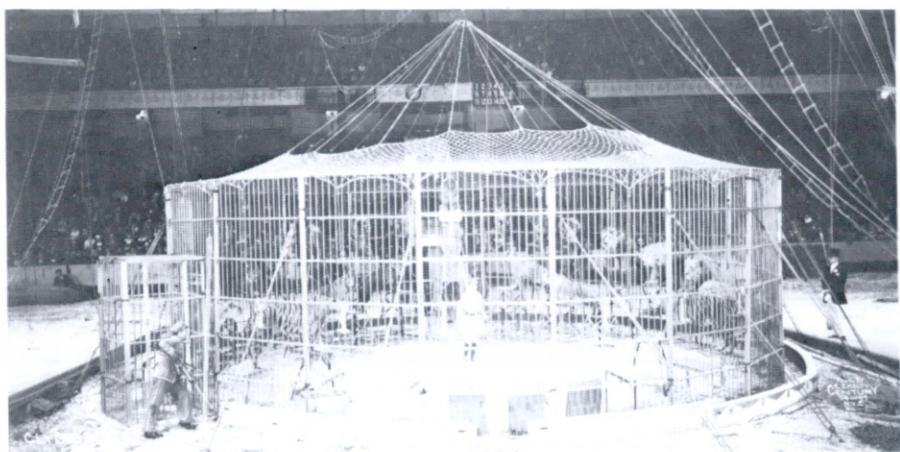
I am looking to aquire all
available information about
this show as follows:

- Loading list of wagons.
- Loading sequence of flats.
- Pictures of loaded flats, individual wagons, lot scenes, show scenes.
- Program.
- Route sheet.

Please state what you can loan
or sell to me.

FRITS VAN SOLT
Westkanaaldijk 22
3606 Am Maarssen
The Netherlands

CHS Member



A Fantasy in Five Acts

Clyde Beatty and the New York Press

By Joanne Carol Joys

PART TWO ACT IV—1934—THE SPLIT

Beatty's career sped along in high gear. The 1933 Hagenbeck-Wallace season was a success, and in September in Bristol, Virginia, he married his long-time girl friend Harriet Evans. At the winter date in Cleveland, Beatty gained more publicity when he called forth in rehearsal, a committee of four brother lions to punish Sammy, a renegade lion who had killed a lioness. All-time attendance records were broken at the Public Hall. Ten thousand jammed into one performance and the manager ordered the outside doors opened so that the four thousand outside could see there was no room left.¹

After this, he was off to Hollywood and the Mack Sennett Studio to make a twelve-chapter serial for Mascot, entitled *The Lost Jungle*. Early in March, Ringling officials announced that Beatty would play both the Ringling New York date and the Hagenbeck-Wallace Chicago Coliseum engagement.² During this month,

two national articles appeared; "Clyde Beatty Says Women Are Like Tigers," in *Pictorial Review* and another on March 18 in the Sunday supplement *Every Week Magazine*.³

Lobby poster for *The Lost Jungle*, a serial produced by Mascot Productions in 1934. Author's collection.



Clyde Beatty and his wild animals in Madison Square Garden during the 1934 Ringling-Barnum engagement. Pfening Archives.

The sick and aging John Ringling was not fairing as well. The *News* quipped that the employer of animal trainers "who bend the tempers of jungle beasts to their will, today asked the law for the second time in six months to divorce him from the blonde young wife whose temper he had found 'violent and ungovernable.'"⁴ Ringling, who suffered from thrombosis, insisted his pulse jumped from 68 to 82 when she flew into a rage on being asked to go for dinner. His pulse soared from 76 to 104 when she denounced him in the presence of servants in his house.⁵ The *News* also ran a two page article, "Ringlings Own Circus But Find Life Isn't One," that outlined the brothers' family rows and divorce suits.⁶

What this meant for Beatty was that Gumpertz was still in charge of the circus empire and the two did not see eye to eye. The manager dropped Beatty's billing to third or fourth and radically cut his pre-season publicity. Beatty was probably further irritated by the publicity Frank Buck was garnering at the Music Hall, a treatment denied his picture a year previous. Buck's picture grossed \$12,000 its first week, during which he did five shows a day at Radio City, made four transcription records, a movie newsreel, and had five speaking appointments at public schools.⁷ In fact, the ads read in a very circus-like manner: "Lord of the Jungle! Knight of the Wilds! He hurls his very life in the teeth of earth's most vicious beasts! Fights them, conquers them, takes them alive—to make ten million men and women revel in undreamed of

thrills."⁸ The promotional ad for *Wild Cargo* in the March 27 *Variety* called his jungle circus, "the biggest show on earth! His tent is the big blue top of jungle skies!!! His stars are kings and clowns of the wilds! . . . His romance the raw and reckless courage of he-man fighting a howling hell!" The ad urged showmen to maximize profits by advertising it like a circus.⁹

The final straw came when the circus was scheduled to open without a full rehearsal. Dexter Fel-

lows claimed it would give a performance "supercharged with excitement." No one, however, was more nervous than Beatty who had just arrived in town "with his forty-seven animals and his bride." Twenty of the big cats were new acquisitions and Beatty had not performed with them since January. Two months was an unusually long period of idleness for both Beatty and the cats. "I think they'll remember me, all right," he said, "but what I'm afraid of is that they've forgotten each other. . . . I'll probably have trouble keeping them apart."¹⁰ Beatty then reportedly got into a strong disagreement with Gumpertz over the lack of rehearsal time and walked out. He knew this meant the end of the wonderful times in New York, but refused to relent until he was granted rehearsal time.

When the circus opened—filled by all reports with more action than ever, Beatty's act went over well (although *Variety* reported the cats were a little lethargic).¹¹ Beatty was especially effective when he passed his pistol and whip outside the steel-barred enclosure to "hypnotize" the roll-over tiger. "The sigh that goes up from the audience when the tiger is through rolling and Beatty is out of the cage is like the exhaust of a million bath tubs."¹² If it was true Beatty's publicity had been ordered cut, then it becomes evident that the Broadway columnists had not publicized him as a favor to the circus or because of a payoff by Ringling. They sincerely liked him and they would demonstrate their admiration in the next few weeks.

Walter Winchell wrote, "Recommended to diversion seekers: Clyde Beatty's spellbinding indifference in a cage of tigers and lions at the Ringling-Barnum-Bailey Circus. . . ."¹³ On the same day, Robert Garland, theater critic of the *World-Telegram* who had enjoyed Beatty's act from the beginning, produced a delightful article describing the experiences of himself and his children at the circus: "I played 'possum—young' possum with Bubbles, Kenneth, and Junior. They don't like old people. They just put up with them. So I made out that I was never in love with Lillian Leitzel. I was, though. Year after year, in Baltimore and elsewhere, I adored that lovely lady. It wasn't because she managed to throw herself over her own shoulder more often than you might think possible. Not that alone, at any rate. Through an alchemy of her personal devising she became the great lady of The Greatest Show on Earth.

"She had talent. She had distinction. She had charm. I, along with the circus miss her. With out her the big top is never quite the same.

"But to Bubbles, Kenneth, and Junior Lillian Leitzel isn't so much as a name. Clyde Beatty is, however, Clyde Beatty who, in the center ring, is, 'the fearless, youthful trainer of wild animals,' demonstrating, two times a day, from New York to Baraboo, Wisconsin, 'man's power over ferocious beasts of the jungle.' Demonstrating, at the same time that a showman is a showman.

"Not that I am belittling Clyde Beatty. How could I? It's not to his discredit that he sets out to be brave to the best possible advantage. Or that Bubbles prefers him to Jimmy Cagney. Bubbles, with seven circuses behind her, is a Clark Gable fan. He, apart from her mother and the Junior who is her brother, is Bubbles' everything. But, until the night Dexter Fellows invited us to the circus, Mr. Cagney ran second to Mr. Gable. Now, that isn't so. Mr. Cagney has dropped down a peg, making room for Mr. Beatty. Not for Mr. Beatty, the big beat-the-beasts man. But Mr. Beatty the good-looker.

"Mr. Beatty, realizing that two and two makes one, even in the animal kingdom, brings sex appeal into the circus. In puttees, white pants, and the winsomest of windbreakers, he is what widows and misses cry for.

"Sex appeal or no sex appeal, get

Special Clyde Beatty lithograph used by Ringling-Barnum for the 1934 New York date. Pfening Archives.



Clyde Beatty and Cecile Parker in *The Lost Jungle*. Pfening Archives.

up or no get up, Mr. Beatty's act occupies the center ring. And deserves to. You can push the Wallenda Family over toward Ninth Avenue and shoot the Great Hugo and his not-so-great co-bullet from a cannon along the arena's southern side, but Clyde Beatty occupies the center ring, the spotlight and the attention of the customers. He earns them too. All three of them."

This circus, Garland concluded, was as dramatic as he ever saw it, far better than the boring '33 version. "Always dramatic, it has never exceeded its present degree of quality."¹⁴ There was no doubt the show was sensational as the police arrested a stream of persistent scalpers outside the Garden, where distraught women and children faced SRO signs.

On April 3, Burris Jenkins again featured Beatty in his cartoon called, "Bringing Himself Back Alive!" Jenkins had accompanied Beatty in a backstage tour of the cats following a performance:

"Keep in the middle and you'll be all right," says Beatty. I keep in the middle. Beatty starts down the plank. In one stride the roaring breaks out. They'd spotted him. Paws spread wide—they looked 18 inches across—dripping claws, great legs tawny or striped, reach for him from both sides. A few feet behind him, I follow. Not one of them makes a pass at me. They don't even seem to notice me.





This five column drawing appeared in the April 4, 1934 issue of the *New York Evening Journal*. Author's collection.

They've just been fed and each is nursing a huge chunk of raw meat.

"Beatty goes between them, snapping his fingers at their faces, whistling at them, laughing at their ferocity. A few minutes before he'd been in there alone, with 29 of them, alone and unarmed. Unarmed because, at one stage of his act, the boy trainer tosses away his whip, his chair and his pistol with a tiger crawling at his feet. 'I only do this,' he explains, 'when they're behaving right.'"¹⁵

Beatty continued to figure in political cartoons. The *Herald-Tribune* ran one in which General Johnson of the NRA was trying to subdue the auto manufacturers (lions) and labor (tigers). The title was "When the Big Cats Start a Roughhouse." The sign on the arena called it, "The Great Clyde Beatty Johnson Wild Animal Performing Act."¹⁶ A couple of weeks later a *Herald-Tribune* editorial entitled, "Why Not Let the Circus Do It?" wondered if the aides of General Johnson possessed the hypnotic eye of Clyde Beatty they could handle the protestors against the NRA.¹⁷

Then a rumor in the April 10 *Variety* reported that "Dorothy Herbert will emulate Clyde Beatty and debut shortly as a wild animal trainer. The equestrienne is not known to have heretofore handled big cats, but has expressed herself as being unafraid. Showed her stuff by enter-

ing a cage of lions at Sarasota last Winter."¹⁸ The *Sun* had described Herbert at the the show opening, as riding a beautiful black horse and not wearing "much more clothes than a burlesque strip artist after the last strip." She "figures all through the show, winding up with breath-taking hurdle jumping with her black steed."¹⁹

The columnists ignored this announcement and kept writing about Beatty. Edwin Hill of the *Journal* claimed drama was never higher in the circus than when the young man from Ohio entered the arena. "There's a thrill in that spectacle that tingles right up the backbone. The old, old suspense and dread that one of the big cats might jump." Beatty, he added "has the gift, just like Daniel in the Bible... the knack of it in his bones." Hill grew even more maudlin when he described Beatty's performances near his hometown. His mother couldn't attend because it was too much for her heart. "She stays at home and listens with her heart in her mouth for the telephone to ring. And the first thing young Beatty does when he springs from the cage is to dash to the nearest phone and tell his mother that the jungle cats have been fooled again."²⁰

Probably no article was more complimentary than the one written by Mark Hellinger who was from a wealthy family who opposed his becoming a reporter. His peers described Hellinger as kind, honest, gentle, hardworking, never a double-crosser, and rich in talent. Hellinger died at 44, and during the last 14 years of his life consumed a bottle of brandy a

BOSTON GARDEN ONE WEEK ONLY

TWICE DAILY Beginning

MONDAY Night, MAY 2

PERFORMANCES AT 2 & 8 P.M.

Doors Open at 1 & 7

DIRECT FROM MADISON SQ.
GARDEN, NEW YORK CITY



RINGLING BROS. and BARNUM & BAILEY CIRCUS

THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH

Presenting 10,000 MARVELS including
800 AMERICAN STARS—100 CLOWNS—
700 HORSES—50 ELEPHANTS—
1009 MENAGERIE ANIMALS—
NEW CONGRESS OF FREAKS

MOST STARTLING EXHIBITION
OF THE AGE!

Iron-Nerved **BEATTY**

ALONE and SINGLE-HANDED in
a MAMMOTH STEEL ARENA
with THE LARGEST GROUP of
PERFORMING JUNGLE-BRED
LIONS and TIGERS

Beatty's final appearance with Ringling-Barnum was in Boston in 1934. Pfening Archives.

day. If Walter Winchell was the first Broadway columnist, Hellinger was the first Broadway reporter.²¹ Praise from Hellinger was quite meaningful for as a rule he disliked circuses.

But he had heard so much about Beatty that he finally relented and saw him perform.

"He's still under thirty—but with his circus work, his books, and his motion pictures, he is known to millions of citizens in America and to animal trainers throughout the world. . . . But right here and now, I want to thank Mr. Beatty for one thing: Watching him work for the first time from a box seat, I received one of the greatest thrills of my life. His performance is the greatest act I have ever witnessed—and that takes in the Volstead Act and Winchell's bravery when he played the Paramount. . . . He has taught lions to hurdle, and he is the only living trainer who has succeeded in teaching a tiger to roll over at his command. How long he will remain the only living trainer is extremely problematical. Thus far, Clyde Beatty has been pretty lucky. He has been mighty close to death on numerous occasions and he is only a step or two in advance of the Grim Reaper every time he walks out for a performance. His is, beyond a shadow of a doubt, the most hazardous occupation in the world. Compared to Beatty, the average steeplejack is a first class pansy. . . ."

Not only was Beatty a great performer, but Hellinger found him personable and interesting to talk to. "We spent two hours together. And I can't remember when I've enjoyed an interview quite so much." The only part he did not particularly like, was the close-up visit with the big cats. "Here are lions and tigers what are lions and tigers! Thoroughly healthy, dangerous, unfriendly and treacherous." Beatty, in contrast, was a "sweet, unaffected, simple guy. Nervous, quick, smiling, polite and a good listener, he is a fatalist, knows his cats well, and is no fool."²²

The *Sun* insisted the success of the circus in 1934 was because of its emphasis on "drama in the raw." That, they contended is "what the circus is. Nine persons out of ten go to the circus to get a thrill, to see men and women flirt with death, and the greater the risk, the better they like it." Behind Beatty's, the Wallendas, Mme. Gillette's and the Zacchinis, acts lie "the possibility that something might happen, something not on the program. It's that, more than any other attraction, that packs 'em in at the circus."

"The big hand goes to the acts in which the performers risk, if not their lives, serious injury in the event of failure. . . . Take Beatty's act: It's sheer courage. . . . He's got those cats under control, but by what at times seems a pretty slim margin. . . . And all the while the other cats are watching—watching, it seems, for their master to give one single sign his nerve is weakening. . . . A few at a time, he can handle them, but what keeps the customers and their wives gripping the edges of their chairs is the possibility that some

day, led by one treacherous beast, the whole pack will turn on Beatty. The thunder of applause that sweeps the Garden as Beatty emerges from the cage and takes his airy bow probably hides many a sigh of relief."²³

On April 15, the *Sunday Mirror* devoted an entire page to "Clyde Beatty Cool in Cage." The reporter, Lane Sherrard, expected to meet a grim cave-man with hard eyes, more at home with animals than people. It proved a shock to find a very slender, courteous young man "with amused gray eyes." What's more he admitted he enjoyed talking to people but they did not realize his was an ordinary job like theirs. This nearly knocked the interviewer off his chair. "The most modest and most profound statement I ever heard made," continued Sherrard, "was his reply to my question as to whether it took a lot of courage to enter the arena. 'No,' he said, 'anyone could do it who wanted to take the trouble to understand them. That's the trick. You have to know your animal.'"²⁴

The publicity continued as the *Sun* showed Beatty holding a waif whom he was introducing to one of his caged tigers at the annual circus party for New York's crippled and orphaned children.²⁵ The *Journal* depicted Beatty getting a Secret Agent X-9 badge from Alexander Raymond, who drew the popular daily comic strip.²⁶ Since there was no stopping the writers, Dexter Fellows decided to cash in on Beatty's popularity and the current fights to unseat Tammany Hall chieftain John Curry. The political machine, nicknamed the Tiger, had been the seat of power for political bosses like the notorious Boss Tweed. So after an old tiger died peacefully in its cage, Fellows posthumously named him "Boss Tweed"

and said he had pined away after Tammany's crushing defeat at the polls to LaGuardia. Another tiger was quickly dubbed "John Curry," after "Boss Tweed" became a rug for Robert Ringling, while the roll-over tiger was named "Fiorello."

But they "behaved like gentlemen instead of a couple of politicians."²⁷

On the 19th, the *News* picked up the Dorothy Herbert story. Gumpertz announced that he was importing the largest wild animal act in Europe next fall for her to handle. The act, he contended, had seventy lions and tigers. Herbert indicated she had been experimenting with tigers for some time and they were not very different from untamed horses. "Dorothy, billed as the best known circus girl in the world, will work all winter breaking in her new act. . . . Next spring she would demonstrate 'that a horse girl can know her lions and tigers, too.'"²⁸

Clyde Beatty's return to the Hagenbeck show in Chicago was announced in this 1934 ad in the *Chicago News*. Author's collection.

But the columnists never winked an eye at the rumors. On the 21st, John Chapman in "Mainly About Manhattan" wrote about Beatty, "the kitty teacher," and "champ baseball fan." Beatty in his eagerness to get to the ballgame, had his rollover tiger only do two rolls rather than six. Angered she sprang at him, and he got her back in line after a few ticklish moments.²⁹ The *News* also pictured Beatty taking a busman's holiday at the Bronx Zoo with his wife and zoo curator, Raymond Ditmars.³⁰ Ed Sullivan of the *News*

queried, "Why Clyde Beatty, the lion tamer, only gets, about \$20 each time he steps into a cage of thirty lions and tigers (he's tied to a contract he signed when he was a youngster with the Hagenbeck circus, offspring of the Ringlings)?"³¹

Beatty, himself, was still enjoying the

COLISEUM **NOW**
Twice Daily—2 & 7 P. M.
 Once Over 1 & 7 P. M. **FAST TIME**
 Last Time Next Sunday Night



**HAGENBECK
 H-WALLACE
 CIRCUS**

**Presenting Hundreds of
 Amazing New Features!**

EXTRA ADDED
ATTRACTION
BEGINNING
TOMORROW (TUES.)
MATINEE

First Time in Chicago
PERSONAL APPEARANCE OF
**CLYDE
 BEATTY**

In a Single-Handed Battle With
**40 FEROCIOUS
 MAN-EATING
 LIONS AND TIGERS**
BEFORE YOUR VERY EYES!

Tickets include admission to everything
Prices 4000 SEATS 40c
Main Floor Bal. & Box 1, Main Floor 50c;
 Bal. 40c; Box Seats, \$1.10—Free. & Bal.
 Box, Main, Main Floor 50c & \$1.10; Bal.
 40c & 50c; Box Seats, \$1.10. All prices in-
 clude tax

SEATS NOW on Sale at Coliseum,
 Lyon & Healy's, Marshall Field's

limelight. He and his bride attended the William Fahenstock, Jr.'s annual circus party. Held at "Bill's Gay Nineties" on East 54th Street, the guests were given large aprons and served beefsteak minus knives and forks.³² The *New Yorker* reported Beatty, the guest speaker at the Ohio Society, showed up dressed to kill at the Hotel Pennsylvania—a day late.³³

Quentin Reynolds wrote a *Colliers* piece about the five most courageous fighters he knew: Gene Tunney, Bill Terry, Frank Shields, Clyde Beatty and Eddie Rickenbacker. Reynolds concluded: "They really ought to be ashamed of themselves; sticking out their chins for punches like that. They've got no more right to be alive and yet they laugh and go right back for more. I don't know, guess they're all just a little bit crazy—these daredevils with a permanent twinkle in their eyes."³⁴

Meanwhile, the Ringling show had extended its stay at the Garden from three to four weeks. Business ran 30 per cent ahead of the best grosses since 1929, and an air of confidence surrounded the show.³⁵ But *Variety* still commented that there was only "one thing lacking in the circus biz. And that's the lack of a sufficient novelty. They repeat year in and year out the same style of acts. Names are few, only Clyde Beatty in recent years coming to the forefront as a billable attraction."³⁶

Obviously this praise did not thwart Gumpertz in his determination to get rid of Beatty. In the same May edition of *Variety*, he blatantly stated that Beatty and his wild animal act would not be with the Ringling show the following season when it played the Garden. Rather than take Beatty to the Boston date this year, he would be sent directly to Chicago to rejoin Hagenbeck-Wallace in mid-run. The strategy proved sound.³⁷

Beatty closed with Ringling on Sunday, opened with Hagenbeck-Wallace for the Tuesday matinee, and by Wednesday night 1,500 were turned away from the overflow crowd. *Billboard* reported the show would be a near sell out for the remainder of its run. Beatty, the weekly conceded, "has a wonderful act and gives the audience the thrill it is looking for."³⁸

"Clyde Beatty Great Dramatist With Cast of Killers," screamed a banner head in the Chicago *Daily News*, upon his debut in the Windy City. Drama critic Lloyd Lewis declared emphatically that, "One of the blackest marks ever put opposite the name of Hollywood in the records of great American errors is its failure to make a thriller out of Clyde Beatty and his carnivora."

"How so inept a piece of moving picture work as the recent 'Big Cage' could have been made out of such a subject is

beyond non-Hollywood comprehension."

"Beatty," he continued, had become the "beau ideal" of Chicago cameramen. "So

NEW YORK
HIPPODROME
 43rd to 44th Street at 6th Avenue
SHORT SEASON—STARTING MATINEE
THURSDAY
MARCH 18
COLE BROS
CIRCUS
 WITH
CLYDE BEATTY
 Greatest Wild Animal
 Trainer of This or Any Other Age; Battling
FEROCIOUS, MAN EATING
40 LIONS AND TIGERS
 AN ECLIPSING EPOCH IN THE
WORLD'S GREATEST
AMUSEMENT INSTITUTION
A TRIUMPH OF COLOSSAL ACHIEVEMENTS
Bigger—Better—Grander—Than Ever Before
400 ARENICA STARS
—GREAT 5 CONTINENTAL ANIMAL
DISPLAYS—
3 HERDS OF ELEPHANTS—PRODIGIOUS HORSE
FAIR—60 CLOWNS
—CONGRESS OF FAMOUS FREAKS.
 Brimming Over with Innovations and Wonderful Surprises and a Myriad of Unprecedented Amazing Features from All Strange Lands.
GREAT AURELIA TROUPE
9 OF THE GREATEST BAREBACK RIDERS IN THE WORLD
FLYING HAROLDS—AERIAL NEISSES
CHAMPION SOMERSAULTING AERIALISTS
OF AMERICA AND CONTINENTAL EUROPE
TWICE DAILY—2 & 8 P.M.
DOORS OPEN 1 & 7 P.M.
POPULAR PRICES
50c to \$2.50—2,000 SEATS 50c

Cole Bros. Circus newspaper ad used in New York in 1937. Pfening Archives.

dramatic is his every movement as he wheels among his snarling lions and tigers, and so sharp and suspenseful are his gestures of command that I should have thought any film magnate's little niece could have filmed him with a \$2 BroWnie kodak."

Lewis insisted Beatty was not only a great trainer but a "great showman," possessing a "true actor's instinct for gathering all eyes upon himself and holding them there until he is ready to let them go." From the chilling entry of the cats, to

the "highest power prologue I ever saw," to the conclusion of the act, Beatty "stages what is to me the biggest thrill in a lifetime of circus going." Beatty, himself, must have enjoyed the critic's likening him to "a little Dempsey in the ring."³⁹

The Gumpertz feud with Beatty seemed foolish at face value, especially when considering Earl Chapin May's observations in the *Herald-Tribune*. He deemed it lamentable that despite their popularity, fewer lion, tiger, and leopard acts were in circuses. Only a scant dozen such acts were on the road. With three circuses plying the rails, big cat acts had become too cumbersome for truck shows. Old trainers had found work at amusement parks, and zoos, or gone to Hollywood to raise wild animal actors for the movies. No daredevil ambitious youngsters had a chance. In fact, it had come down to two great established stars: Clyde Beatty and Mabel Stark. Stark, nicknamed "Crazy Mabel," already had more years in the arena than any woman and her endurance record had only been equaled by two living men. Deemed a "suicide trainer," she had seen contemporary women trainers like Lucia Zora retire, Dolly Castle quit after losing part of a hand to a lion, Ione Carle marry and leave the circus to help run an orange grove in California, Valecita, a leopard trainer, killed by her charges in her Michigan training barn in 1924, and Adgie and her lions retired.

Among the men, Steve Batty had gone into railroad work, Dutch Ricardo married and retired in San Francisco, Louis Roth had an animal farm in Hollywood, Chubby Guilfoyle worked at Snake King's rattlesnake farm, Franz Woska toiled at the Benson animal farm, and Allen King and Pete Taylor had both dropped out of the business. Of the old timers, only John Helliot and Jules Jacot were still at it, after 30 and 25 years respectively. The world of male trainers was still somewhat competitive, but Beatty, who May called "the Apollo Belvedere of the big cage," ruled supreme. Beatty had "an all time record for size and daring in 'flashy' cat acts. He takes forty times as many chances as his nineteenth century, bewhiskered progenitors. Hence he is in and out of the hospital."

"Happily," May added, "while taking long chances he takes good care of himself." The author worried, however, that when Beatty and Stark retired, "the gaps they leave may not be filled. Only a few daring souls rise to eminence in their profession. Still fewer remain long at that eminence. And the opportunities seem to be growing fewer each year."⁴⁰

Perhaps Gumpertz believed Beatty had been over-exposed in New York and that

he would be a far more valuable asset in Chicago. There also was the problem of increasing jealousy. Circus performers typically labor in relative anonymity. When Beatty became recognizable to the general public, a feeling of dissension could have flared among the performers.

But the circus season was too hectic and the future too unpredictable for Beatty to worry yet about the loss of the Garden date. In June his second movie, *The Lost Jungle*, was released. The New York Times called him "the Frank Merriwell of the big top, the shy lover, the scourge of the black-hearted, the one-man jungle safari. Too bashful to propose to the gal he loves, she leaves for the South Seas and is shipwrecked. He follows in a dirigible, saves everybody in sight, from everything in sight, and wins the girl. It all has a synthetic look, but the lions and tigers are real, and Mr. Beatty knows his business. The children will sit through it twice."⁴¹

In August, Beatty arrived on a Sunday in Buffalo, and rescued four boys in a small boat while fishing on the Niagara River. Beatty and his friend, Walter Sweeney, came upon a rowboat caught in the swift current and towed it ashore. The boys, the *Evening News* reported, were almost overwhelmed when they found out who their rescuer was. On Monday the show played to the greatest number of people ever to attend a circus in Buffalo--20,000. The show was called the finest yet with Beatty's act the biggest attraction.⁴²

A little less than two weeks later, Beatty inadvertently shot himself with his blank gun while battling "Sammy" during a performance before a capacity crowd in Bay City, Michigan. Blood streamed down his leg but he finished the act and after treatment made the night show. He received repeated medical attention while still not missing a performance. By the time Hagenbeck-Wallace showed Ann Arbor on the 28th of August, he limped badly and there was some doubt he could perform, but he did, and the circus was called truly excellent, "with absolutely no criticism heard from the thousands attending." However, after the evening show, Beatty, in extreme pain, could no longer go on, and he entered University Hospital where his room was banned to visitors. He was operated on and in ten days, after the danger of gangrene passed, was released.⁴³

The Washington date on September 18 was special. It marked the first circus parade in the capitol in ten years. Beatty, now back with the circus, spent Sunday with Dr. William Mann of the National Zoo.⁴⁴ The next day, the parade proved an enormous success. The *Post* editorialized, "children crowded the kerb; but

crowding around them were far more adults. Bureau chiefs and the most mature clerks lined the windows of every governmental office along the route. Serious businessmen and working women deserted their desks to do involuntary

nounced the unthinkable--it would challenge Ringling in New York.

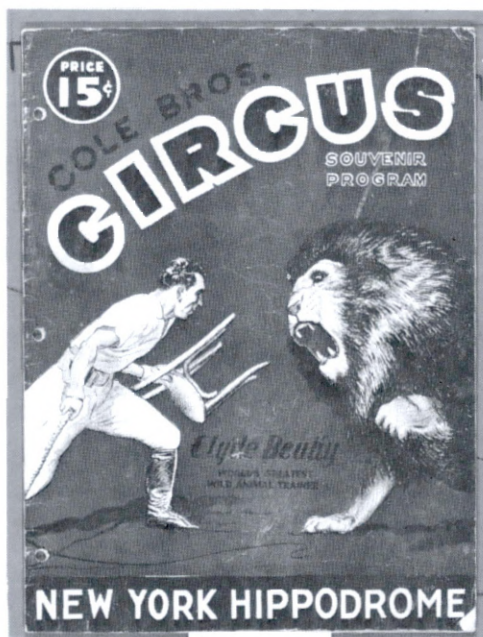
ACT V--1937-THE RETURN

The fall and winter of 1936-1937 were seasons of turmoil for the circus industry. In November, Edward Ballard, former head of the American Circus Corporation, was shot and killed in Hot Springs, Arkansas. A week later, the A. G. Barnes Circus announced it was not renewing Mabel Stark's contract. Hagenbeck-Wallace would be pitted against Cole Bros. on the West Coast. Most tragic of all was the death of John Ringling in New York on December 7.

On December 8, the New York Times announced that New York would be the scene of a circus war--"Cole-Beatty debut to break 40-Year Monopoly." The Times continued that the "undisputed reign over the hearts of children and other circus fans hereabouts that the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus has wielded each Spring is to be challenged next March by a rival organization, owned and operated by former employees of what Dexter Fellows fondly describes as 'the greatest show on earth.'" Two earlier attempts at a challenge, one by Sells-Floto which was then absorbed by Ringling, and one by 101 Ranch Wild West Show failed to survive.

The circus would play the 5,000-seat Hippodrome and be staged in the manner of Billy Rose's *Jumbo*, which had played there the previous year. Allen Foster, who had choreographed that show would do the same for Cole's forty girl ensemble. Fellows snorted that any circus outfit had the right to come to the big city, if they like. "Few have liked and fewer still have survived the experience." Fellows indicated they certainly were not worried about the competition.¹ In a more humorous vein, *Variety* reported Beatty was in Africa trying to secure a "tyron," a cross between a tiger and lion that was one-and-a-half times the size of a fully grown lion, while a later issue claimed Beatty would have 70 lions and tigers in the cage. In actuality, Beatty and his wife had been touring Europe for two months, buying animals for the show.²

But the Cole show beat Ringling to New York and ran unopposed most of its date, including the always very lucrative Easter week which began on March 28. Ringling missed it both because of its earliness and a conflict in the hockey schedule. Ringling had negotiated to play the dates at the Bronx Coliseum, but boxing and wrestling held sway there.



Cover of the special program published for the Cole Bros. Circus 1937 New York City date. Pfening Archives.

homage. There is still some hope, it seems for the Nation; not only are the boys and girls of 1934 just boys and girls; in the hearts of their elders there still live the boys and girls that used to be."⁴⁵

Beatty could not miss a show like this, so he hobbled back into the arena after a three-week absence. It was also his wedding anniversary and for his wife it was not a happy moment. She claimed she was getting increasingly nervous watching him, and the past three weeks had been a welcome time to relax. She wished he would quit and they could have a real home. Harriet disliked meeting her husband's often wealthy, prestigious non-circus friends when she had to dress in a circus wagon. Her dream that he would tire of the hectic pace of circus life and the tension of placing himself in imminent danger was never to be.⁴⁶

The eventful season of 1934 gave way ros.-Clyde Beatty Circus is well documented. It meant for Beatty the acquisition and training of an entirely new act for the 1935 season. The show attracted the best of the Ringling subsidiary shows' management and crews along with the most billable act in the circus business. After two years of establishing the show on the road, the Cole management an-

Cole-Beatty got the type of pre-season coverage usually afforded Ringling. Publicity shots of elephants, girls on horses, and Beatty posing with his 550-pound lion, Menelik, filled the papers. One well ballyhooed stunt was Beatty's plan to stand in a Radio City studio at 7:45 p.m. and give commands to his animals over a microphone. Mrs. Beatty was to be in the cage with the animals at the Hippodrome, "to help them along in case Clyde slips in big words the animals don't get."³

The "outstanding novelty of the circus" wrote Robert Bulkley, Jr. of the *Herald-Tribune*, "is that it will be presented in a theater and will feature a ballet troupe of nearly 100 girls. This is the first time that a circus has been given in a New York theater, and is the first attempt to put on a 'continental' or 'intimate' circus in New York."⁴ Raymond Dean, the show's advance agent assured the press that Beatty's animals were still "rough and tough" and, "will give young and intrepid Mr. Beatty as much of a thrill inside the cage as the spectators get from their seats."⁵

The circus arrived in New York at the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad freight yards at Eleventh Avenue and Twenty-Fifth Street at 3 p.m. one day behind a snow-storm.⁶

The radio experiment was tried and although the cats came to attention at Beatty's voice, rather than obeying, they began to fight one another, which proved the trainer's presence was imperative. WINS would, however, broadcast different aspects of the show every afternoon for a week.⁷ Beatty also announced that his wife now had an act of her own in which a lion and tiger rode together on the back of an elephant. He himself had 38 lions and tigers, but he feared them less than New York traffic. "I wouldn't drive a car in New York for any amount of money."⁸

On March 18, the circus premiered, but unhappily the front pages of the papers headlined the Texas school disaster in which 427 were killed in a gas blast. Still the show opened to good reviews although it became evident quickly that the "fascinating possibility that one of the trapeze artists may land in your lap," proved a bit disconcerting to the *Post* reporter used to the vastness of the Garden.⁹ There was an intimate and informal air about this circus in a theater which

combined "pageantry and sex appeal," according to the *Herald-Tribune*.¹⁰

The *Mirror's* Robert Coleman said the new circus merited "the use of high-powered superlatives--starting with terrific and concluding with perfectly swell." Beatty's act, Coleman noted, was bigger and better than ever. "It wilts you to watch him."¹¹ Reporter Douglas Gilbert of the *World-Telegram* called the show thrilling and amusing, and a winner. Every act was "high class and big-time and not

most to count the teeth of the lions and have a look at a tiger's tonsils."¹² John Anderson of the *Journal* called it "grand entertainment. . . . As my excuse for going, I submit that even a drama critic deserves entertainment when he can find it. . . . It is difficult to decide whether it's more hair-raising to defy gravity or a cageful of lions and tigers. Plainly both are out for reckless people every instant of the time, but a cageful of wild beasts is, plainly, more pictorial and dramatic. Old

General Gravity just sits there doing nothing--much. But tigers snarl, and horses sweat in the ring when they smell them being brought in, and everybody tries to pretend they are sitting on something besides the edge of the seat and a violent imagination. It's no use. The Clyde Beatty stunt is the works, and the only act you could end such a circus with, I should imagine, except, probably, pandemonium. Like the one and only Popeye. Mr. Beatty ought to come out in favor of spinach. They are real lions, though I wish to Heaven they weren't."¹⁴

Actually, *Variety* observed, the Cole name was absent on the Hippodrome canopy. It announced simply, "Clyde Beatty Circus." Beatty did work 38 cats and the critic noticed scant dif-

ference between these and the old Hagenbeck-Wallace cats. The finale, however, was not only a roll over tiger, but one that spinned as well.¹⁵

The circus was patronized by Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia, his wife and children, and Governor and Mrs. Hoffman of New Jersey and their family. The event gained free publicity and the circus announced it would go to three performances a day during Easter week. Bill Farnsworth, sports editor of the *Journal*, noted that "a war to the death has been declared between the COLE-BEATTY circus and the RINGLING Bros. who enter New York shortly. . . . BEATTY once worked with RINGLING but left over a salary squabble, and he told the latter he could run a better circus any day. . . . RINGLING told him he would starve. . . . Now the BEATTY outfit is clicking at the Hippodrome and the RINGLINGS are gnashing their teeth. . . ."¹⁶

In another column, Farnsworth noted that his son had taken to hanging around the stage door of the Hippodrome, so he checked it out and "found 40 ballet girls



This six column drawing of Beatty appeared in the March 19, 1937 New York *Evening Journal*, the day after the opening. Pfening Archives.

something dragged off the top shelf of George Hamid's whistle stop booking lists." The high spot of the circus, Gilbert insisted, was certainly Clyde Beatty's performing lions and tigers. The only problem was the staging in which the ring was set so deep, side-seated customers found it difficult to see.¹²

The *Sun* concurred that the one-ring circus had many merits. "You don't have to be cross-eyed to take it in. Its aerial acts, performed without the security of nets and within startling reach of the human eye, are almost too daring and dangerous for comfort. . . . there isn't a dull moment in the show. . . . The piece de resistance, of course, is Clyde Beatty himself, with more dangerous looking lions and tigers than ever, and the thrill increased immeasurably by the fact that much of the audience is close enough al-

in the COLE-BEATTY circus that outlook the chorus of any legit show that has been on Broadway in years."¹⁷

John Chapman of the *News* hoped the Beatty show proved that there is a public for "a one ring circus where things are intimate and cozy. Maybe it will give some showmen the idea that New York can support a permanent one-ring affair like, for instance, the Cirque d'Hiver or the Cirque Medrano in Paris. I hope so. A circus could be built around a few clowns like Kelly."¹⁸

The expensively designed and costumed Cole show kept prices at a reasonable \$2.50 maximum, despite the small size of the Hippodrome. The circus broke even, but the resultant publicity was far greater than money could buy and would enable it to virtually hammer to death Hagenbeck-Wallace which tried to dog its route. Critics raved about Emmett Kelly and Otto Griebling, but as usual their best efforts were reserved for Beatty as if a two-year hiatus had never occurred.

Noted Broadway historian Gilbert Seldes, then a reporter for the *Journal*, wrote how his spies from four to nine-and-a-half found Beatty the highlight. "It is reported that Mr. Beatty plays ping pong to relax after a day's work with 'the cats,'" added Seldes. "My spies don't think his work tiring; they want to go right in with him. They say the circus is 'nest.'"¹⁹

On the 19th of March, *Journal* cartoonist Burris Jenkins reported on finally getting enough nerve to enter the big cage with Beatty. He was one of a handful of people who hung around the Hippodrome at one a.m. to watch Beatty break some new cats. Jenkins wrote with as much vigor as he drew:

"He jerks open the safety gate and slams it behind him in one motion. Right in his face, cavernous jaws drip snarling. Green eyes smoldering with hate and fear, watch the Little Man coming. Their Master! Their relentless enemy, but their Master. . . . And then he is in the middle of them. One crack of the whip, one shot from from his gun, one electric move of fearlessness, and yellow, tawny bodies that could crush his head with a blow cringe snarling into corners before the magnetism of courage. . . . So I'm standing by the safety cage full of relief and admiration as we watch the world's

greatest trainer in action. I have just asked his strikingly pretty wife, if she was nervous while he was in the cage. I had noticed her standing silent and tense, her eyes on the ground nearby. She answered shortly, without looking up, 'Of course.'"

When Jenkins entered the arena: "I

ate his big meal of the day at 4:15, and then returned to his hotel for a nap. At 9:30, he was back in the arena, and by 10:15 went out with his wife for a snack. Occasionally he ended the day with a "reckless game of-ping pong. . . . Midnight-to bed and to sleep, counting lions and tigers jumping over a fence."²¹ A few days later, the *Mirror's* editorial page column, "To Hold the MIRROR up to Nature," discussed the Beattys. The secret to his act, claimed Beatty, was "Patience first, then nerve, is what it takes."²²

Frank Graham of the *Sun* devoted his entire column to Beatty and his love of sports. "He wanted to play in the infield of the Cubs or win the lightweight championship of the world," wrote Graham. "But one spring he ran off with the circus. And wound up as the greatest big cat trainer of his time. Or any other time, maybe."²³ On April 12, the *Post* ran a photo of Beatty with two boxers since they were all known as "tough fighters."²⁴

Hype Igoe of the *Journal* did a full-page photo essay on Beatty. "Looking

Beatty right in the eye," began Igoe in "Twentieth Century Tarzan," "you'd never dream that he, in turn, can look in the eye the most treacherous animals in the world, lions, tigers, black and spotted panthers, mountain lions,

grizzly bears, polar bears, bears of all nations, gorillas, elephants, and hyenas, and make them cringe and back away. Mister Beatty calls them 'taggers' those striped cats.

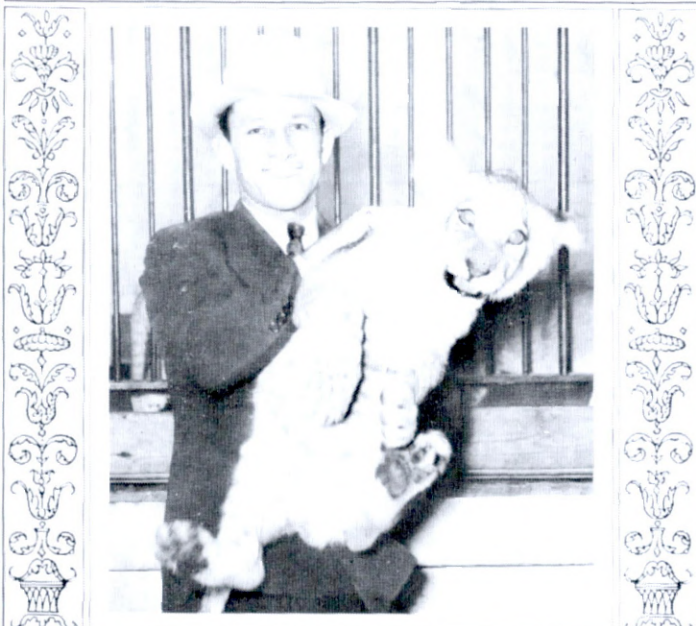
"You'd take him for a polite bank clerk. He is known as the man with a million scars but strange to say, not one of the 'cats' has marred his handsome young face as yet.

"We both mentioned it at the same time and, as if by magic, we knocked three times, the nearest bit of wood to us and said, 'ungerrufen!'"²

The *New Yorker* noted that since they last interviewed Beatty he "is five years older, naturally, and five pounds heavier, which brings his weight up to 149. He now has three rather distinguished-looking worry lines in his forehead—the kind of worry lines that contentious lions

TIME

The Weekly Newsmagazine



Volume XXIX

CLYDE BEATTY & CAPTIVE

Number 43

Clyde Beatty appeared on the cover of the March 29, 1937 issue of *Time* during the New York Hippodrome stand. Pfening Archives.

see the lioness start for us and realize that nothing stands between me and eternity but Clyde Beatty." When she dived from her platform, Jenkins was out of the arena before he took another breath.²⁰

The *Mirror* featured an article which gave a "round the clock report" of Beatty's typical day in New York. At 9 a.m., Clyde and Harriet went to the Hippodrome to rehearse her new act. Thirty-five minutes later, they had breakfast and at 10:30 went shopping on Fifth Avenue. By 2:30, the couple had returned to the Hippodrome for the matinee. At 3:30, Beatty entered the cage with his "38 anti-social beasts" for fifteen minutes. Clyde

and tigers give you. His fingernails and street clothes have brightened up considerably, the result we would guess of a recent stay in Hollywood, during which he made three pictures. And he has taken unto himself a flaxen-haired wife named Harriet, who has blue eyes and artificial lashes."

The writer continued that in 1936, Beatty netted \$60,000 and this year hoped to make \$70,000—a far cry from what he received on Ringling.²⁶

A couple of days later, Jack Layer of the *Journal* who had done a photo essay with Hype Igoe on Beatty, did a photo interview with his lions and tigers. For example, "Yes, me name is Al. I'm the top lion in your act, but I'm gonna tell you something, Beatty. You go in there and strut your stuff at our expense. Suppose that we took it into our noggins to pick a tenderloin or two off your carcass?"²⁷ The next day, Haenigsen, a *Journal* cartoonist, ran a strip, "Meditations of a Clyde Beatty Lion."²⁸ The following day an essay on Beatty appeared on the *Journal's* amateur page.²⁹ On April 4, the *News* featured a full-page, full-color rotogravure of Beatty and Menelik on the front page of the coloroto section.³⁰

Reporters also got a lot of mileage out of stories on Beatty's wife. William Engle of the *World-Telegram* interviewed Harriet who said it was "more trying to be a lion tamer's wife than to be a lion tamer, and she knows because she is both. . . . There is a peculiar fascination about working with the great cats, she had found. They are so moody, their irrationalities are so unpredictable, minor emergencies are so continually imminent that the excitement of seeing Clyde in the cage surrounded by a tumbling, guttural mass of them has never left her."³¹

On the day Ringling opened in the Garden, the *News* featured Harriet and her act. In fact the whole center spread of the paper consisted of action photos of her performance.³² The *Journal's* magazine section, "Up Swing Street," column by James Aswell discussed Harriet and Clyde. "The audience wants blood!" claimed Beatty. "Of course they don't think so, but they do. It's what makes my act get over. Yet it has pushed me to greater and greater risks. I don't know where to go from here." He contended his act was about as dangerous as it could be and still be done two or three times a day. He enjoyed the audience pressure, but did not know what more he could

do. "You've got to keep on taking bigger and bigger risks and no matter what you did last time, you've got to do more next time. It's like a drug." Aswell described him as a "wiry terrier" with a "small boy eagerness about his face." Beatty "likes the smell of danger and the smell of lions and tigers which with him is the same. Maybe Dr. Freud or Dr. Jung could diagnose his case as that of a man with a love of risk

every muscle tense, adds thus another thrill to his wife's act."³⁵ As the circus ended its run in New York, it gained more publicity when it hosted 4,000 orphans from 15 city institutions, and it was clear to all observers that Beatty was their special hero. Ed Sullivan called Beatty, "the kid who used to bring garter snakes to school and scare you half to death."³⁶

In another column, he mentioned watching Beatty petting a scraggly Sixth Avenue tomcat.³⁷ Then on April 8, there was one last publicity stunt that drew the attention of all the papers.

At 3:50 p.m. following his act, Beatty was arrested by the Humane Society's Jacob Jacobs as he left the cage, booked, and released on \$500 bail at the West Forty-Seventh Street station. Jacobs claimed he had watched Beatty for years and had no complaints about the cats' care but the prodding and whipping had to go. Beatty indignantly told reporters he would have plenty to say at his court appearance the next morning. Doc Partello, manager of the circus, and Sol Strauss, attorney, declared they would help represent Beatty in court.³⁸ The flushed trainer acted as if he were in no mood to hear the question, "Is this a publicity stunt?"—no less answer it, claimed the *Times*.³⁹

The next morning, Magistrate Anthony F. Burke acquitted Beatty on the complaint. Jacobs admitted he felt the whip hurt the cats because they growled. Burke said there was nothing to the case. When told that Beatty wanted to explain his side, the Magistrate smiled and said, "Scram!"⁴⁰

Beatty argued that the only purpose of the whip was to keep their attention concentrated on him. "I defy anyone in my position to hurt those fellows and get away with it—They just wouldn't stand for it. I'll stake my reputation that you can't find a single mark on any of those cats."⁴¹ Beatty then went into the pressroom and told the reporters, "I'll take any man in this room in the cage with me and prove to him that most of the time, I simply crack the whip and don't touch the animals at all." With singular unanimity, the reporters, most of whom have been in the West Side Court for years and are reported to be so hardboiled that their shins would turn an ice pick, declined the invitation." Beatty continued to explain that welts were often scars that the fighting animals gave each other, and the cats were prodded on entering and exiting the arena only to keep them from further



Harriett Beatty and her elephant riding tiger and lion act in the Rochester, Indiana winter quarters in the spring of 1937. Pfening Archives.

like the love some men feel for music or chorus girls or Ming pottery."

Now he had the "rather scarifying fact," that he might not satisfy the blood lust of his fans. He felt an act could be hoked up to a certain point, and then one needed real danger. "He paused and grinned—I've got one card left. I'm playing it here in Chicago. I'm giving them my wife." Harriet, who Aswell claimed looked and spoke something like Garbo, had her own very dangerous act which should sate the fans for a while.³³

Everyweek Magazine ran a full-page article, "Why Clyde Beatty Had to Let His Wife Go in the Lion Cage." It said that the diminutive, 104-pound Harriet wanted an act. She was scared to death, but she loved it. But she did have to cure herself of one bad habit—screaming.³⁴ *Variety* reported she did a great job handling the cats, "with Beatty, showman that he is, just outside the cage, seemingly with

fighting.⁴² The whip, he added, had a cotton popper on its end, which only made noise when snapped, not when hitting an animal. He then extended the invitation to enter the arena to Jacobs, so the officer could show him the proper way of handling the animals. At noon, he addressed a luncheon of the Banshees, a group of writers, commentators, and publishers, where he got to explain his case in detail.⁴³

Actually at the end of the trial, the *Post* reported, "The judge wore a broad smile, the defendant wore a broad smile. The complaining witness wore a broad smile. Everybody was having fun."⁴⁴ Bill Farnsworth of the *Journal* wrote the next day, "They had CLYDE BEATTY arrested for cruelty to animals. . . . The poor, cute little tigers and old softie lions that he puts through performances at the circus in the Hippodrome . . . CLYDE must feel terrible over being such a hard-hearted gent. . . . There was a JACOBS to JACOBS to JACOBS triple play in BEATTY'S laughable arrest. . . . I believe it was INSPECTOR JACOBS who had CLYDE arrested. . . . When BEATTY was dragged to the 47th St. station house, he asked for DETECTIVE CASWELL JACOBS, whom he knows . . . and MIKE JACOBS bailed him out. Also, somewhere along the line we suspect that MIKE JACOBS engineered the arrest. . . . As a publicity stunt. . . . Anyway, it made the front pages."⁴⁵

Of course, Burris Jenkins could not let it lie, and drew a cartoon of the man-eating Yankees called, "More Cruelty to Animals," with a banged up trainer (the Southern Leagues) shouting, "Oh, Clyde! How do you tell'em you ain't gon'a hurt'em?"⁴⁶

The prize plum of 1937 publicity had to be the *Time* magazine story which landed Beatty on the cover. The writer described the new circus and then felt the show "stepped up into another class altogether. When a rising curtain disclosed a steel cage, 32 ft. in diameter . . . the lights were lowered, a sound like thunder rumbled, and synthetic lightning glimmered. A big, heavy-maned lion loped from the runway into the cage, slithered along an upward-sloping row of pedestals until he was crouched on the highest one." This continued until twenty-five lions and lionesses, fifteen tigers and tigresses were seated. The thrilling act that followed "is so thoroughly dramatized and 'hoked' up to get the last tingling thrill from the most distant customer, that the skeptical are likely to be unaware of the act's real dangers."

The reporter, just as those first meeting him in 1931, found Beatty to be still a small town boy—"mild, friendly, unostentatious, likeable"—but there was a new

confidence in this natural showman. He felt that blase New Yorkers would not want to wait until the end of the show for his act. "'After all,' the world's greatest catman blandly observed, 'most of 'em must come here to see my act. It was just too long for 'em to set there.'"⁴⁷

FOOTNOTES

Act IV—The Split-1934

1. *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, 3 February 1934.
2. *Billboard*, 3 and 17 March 1934.
3. Julia Shawell, "Clyde Beatty Says Women are Like Tigers," *Pictorial Review*, March 1934, p. 4. *Every-Week Magazine*, *Detroit Free Press*, 8 March 1934.
4. *New York Daily News*, 4 March 1934.
5. *New York Daily News*, April 6, 1934, p. 22.
6. Ruth Reynolds, "RINGLINGS Own CIRCUS—BUT Find LIFE ISN'T ONE," *New York Sunday News*, 1 April 1934, p. 55.
7. Ed Sullivan, "Broadway," *New York Daily News*, 6 April 1934, p. 62.
8. *New York World-Telegram*, 29 March 1934.
9. *Variety*, 27 March 1934.
10. *New York Herald-Tribune*, 30 March 1934, p. 13.
11. *Variety*, 3 April 1934, p. 63.
12. Martin Green, "Greatest Show on Earth Outdoes Itself at Garden," *New York Sun*, 31 March 1934, p. 4.
13. Walter Winchell, "On Broadway," *New York Daily Mirror*, 2 April 1934, p. 19.
14. Robert Garland, "Great Circus at Peak of Power This Year," *New York World-Telegram*, 2 April 1934, p. 14.
15. Burris Jenkins, Jr., "Bringing Himself Back Alive," *New York Evening Journal*, 3 April 1934, p. 25.
16. *New York Herald-Tribune*, 25 March 1934.
17. *New York Herald-Tribune*, 10 April 1934, p. 22.
18. *Variety*, 10 April 1934, p. 63.
19. Green, p. 4.
20. Edwin Hill, "The Human Side of The News," *New York Evening Journal*, 10 April 1934.
21. Mosedale, *op. cit.*
22. Mark Hellinger, "All in a Day—That Beatty Fellow," *New York Daily Mirror*, 13 April 1934, p. 14.
23. *New York Sun*, 14 April 1934, p. 48.
24. Lane Sherrard, "Clyde Beatty Cool in Cage," *New York Mirror*, 15 April 1934, p. 9.
25. *New York Sun*, 16 April 1934, p. 19.
26. *New York Evening Journal*, 17 April 1934, p. 13.
27. *New York Times*, 19 April 1934, p. 27.
28. *New York Daily News*, 19 April 1934, p. 50.
29. John Chapman, "Mainly About Manhattan," *New York Daily News*, 21 April 1934, p. 26.
30. *New York Daily News*, 25 April 1934, p. 27.
31. Ed Sullivan, "Broadway," *New York Daily News*, 27 April 1934, p. 60.
32. Billy Benedict, *New York Evening Journal*, 20 April 1934, p. 18.
33. *New Yorker*, April 28, 1934, p. 17.
34. Quentin Reynolds, "Just a Second," *Collier's*, April 28, 1934, p. 28.
35. *Variety*, 24 April 1934, p. 63.
36. *Variety*, 1 May 1934, p. 55.
37. *Ibid.*
38. *Billboard*, 5 May 1934.
39. Lloyd Lewis, "Clyde Beatty Great Dramatist with Cast of Killers," *Chicago Daily News*, 2 May 1934, p. 31.
40. Earl Chapin May, "Vanishing Tamers of the Big Cats," *New York Herald-Tribune*, 15 April 1934.
41. *New York Times*, 8 June 1934, p. 18.
42. *Buffalo Evening News*, 13 and 14 August 1934.
43. *Ann Arbor News*, 26 August through 6 September, 1934.
44. *Washington Post*, 17 September 1934, p. 3.
45. *Washington Post* [editorial], 18 September 1934, p. 8.
46. Virginia Lee Warren, "Mrs. Clyde Beatty Worries About Lion-Taming Husband," *Washington Post*, 18 September 1934, p. 12.

Act V—The Return-1937

1. *New York Times*, 8 December 1936, p. 27.
2. *Variety*, 10 February 1937, p. 63.
3. Alton Cook, "Circus Stunts in Radio," *New York World-Telegram*, 12 March 1937, p. 12.
4. Robert J. Bulkley, Jr., "Adjectives Over the Hippodrome Herald Arrival of New Circus," *New York Herald-Tribune*, 14 March 1937, p. 5.
5. *New York Evening Journal*, 2 March 1937, p. 11.
6. *New York Times*, 16 March 1937, p. 25.
7. Ben Gross, "Listening In," *New York Daily News*, 18 March 1937, p. 58.
8. Julia McCarthy, "Beatty Makes Lion Sit Up For A Color Camera," *New York Daily News*, 17 March 1937, p. 26.
9. Willela Waldorf, "Spring is Here—Circus Invades Hippodrome," *New York Post*, 19 March 1937.
10. *New York Herald-Tribune*, 19 March 1937, p. 10.
11. Robert Coleman, "Cole Brothers-Clyde Beatty Circus Score," *New York Daily Mirror*, 20 March 1937, p. 20.
12. Douglas Gilbert, "Hippodrome Circus Thrills and Amuses," *New York World-Telegram*, 19 March 1937, p. 32.
13. *New York Sun*, 19 March 1937, p. 21.
14. John Anderson, "John Anderson Reviews Circus Opening at Hippodrome," *New York Evening Journal*, 19 March 1937, p. 24.
15. *Variety*, 24 March 1937, p. 79.
16. W. S. (Bill) Farnsworth, "Sidewalks of New York," *New York Evening Journal*, 26 March 1937, p. 26.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
18. John Chapman, "Mainly About Manhattan," *New York Daily News*, 5 April 1937, p. 36.
19. Gilbert Seldes, "True to Type," *New York Evening Journal*, 30 March 1937, p. 20.
20. Burris Jenkins, Jr., "A FRESH SLANT on Bring Myself Back Alive," *New York Evening Journal*, 19 March 1937, p. 29.
21. Frank Graham, "Setting the Pace," *New York Sun*, 23 April 1937, p. 30.
22. *New York Daily Mirror*, 27 March 1937, p. 6.
23. *New York Daily Mirror*, 3 April 1937, p. 19.
24. *New York Post*, 12 April 1937.
25. Hype Iggoe, "20th Century Tarzan," *New York Evening Journal*, 25 March 1937, p. 30.
26. *New Yorker*, 27 March 1937.
27. *New York Evening Journal*, 31 March 1937, p. 23.
28. Haenigsen, "News and Views—Meditations of a Clyde Beatty Lion," *New York Evening Journal*, 1 April 1937.
29. Stanley J. Dreyfuss, "Beatty Talks on Animal Training," *New York Evening Journal* [amateur page], 2 April 1937, p. 35.
30. *New York Sunday News*, [coloroto], 4 April 1937, front page.
31. William Engle, "Beatty's Wife Likes Big Cats But Keeps 'em 8 Feet Away," *New York World-Telegram*, 31 March 1937, p. 23.
32. *New York Daily News*, 8 April 1937, pp. 4, 36-37.
33. James Aswell, "Up Swing Street—Audiences Are Dangerous," *New York Evening Journal*, 17 April 1937, magazine section.
34. Helen Welshimer, "Why Clyde Beatty Had to Let His Wife Go in the Lion Cage," *EveryWeek Magazine*, 16 May 1937.
35. *Variety*, 21 April 1937, p. 61.
36. Ed Sullivan, "Broadway," *New York Daily News*, 6 April 1937, p. 38.
37. *Ibid.*, 31 March 1937, p. 48.
38. *New York Herald-Tribune*, 8 April 1937, p. 7.
39. *New York Times*, 8 April 1937, p. 21.
40. *New York World-Telegram*, 8 April 1937, p. 26.
41. *New York Evening Journal*, 8 April 1937.
42. *New York Sun*, 8 April 1937, p. 14.
43. *New York Times*, 9 April 1937, p. 19.
44. *New York Post*, 8 April 1937, p. 21.
45. W. S. (Bill) Farnsworth, "Sidewalks of New York," *New York Evening Journal*, 9 April 1937, p. 30.
46. Burris Jenkins, Jr., "More Cruelty to Animals?," *New York Evening Journal*, 10 April 1937, p. 11.
47. "Cat Man," *Time*, March 9, 1937, pp. 44, 45.

The Lion Trainer's Genealogy

BEATTY'S FIRST ESCAPE WAS FROM BITTER CHILDHOOD

By Joanne Carol Joys

Genealogical records provide only the barebones to any biography, if the individuals are not available to interview. Contemporary autobiographies and reminiscences can help add meat. In this case, Jim Tully's, Shanty Irish; Helen Hooven Santmyer's, Ohio Town; and Sherwood Anderson's, Tar-A-Midwest Childhood, Windy McPherson's Son, and Sherwood Anderson's Memoirs, all give detailed descriptions of small town Ohio life and mores at the turn of the century.

The five years in New York were a fantasy come true for any small town boy. Clyde Beatty had lived what could only be dreamed by most youths—attaining stardom as the world's greatest animal trainer, considered the bravest man in the world, hobnobbing with celebrities and reporters, having conversations with Ernest Hemingway, being painted by John Steuart Curry, flying a plane, boxing, watching and meeting his sports heroes, making movies, co-authoring books, and by being unanimously acclaimed by Broadway's toughest columnists and sports-writers.

Even more amazing is what motivated Beatty. Like many driven people, he was hounded by a black dog. For him it was his childhood. Reporters skimmed over his early years making them blissfully bucolic—the country boy enamored with animals, keeping a diversity of pets, who runs off to join the circus, is brought back by distraught parents, runs away again, and in ten years is dazzling Broadway.

Beatty's grandfather, Samuel arrived in Ohio in 1850 when he was five years old. In all probability he came from County Armagh, known as the orchard of Ireland. He eventually settled in Barretts Mills, a tiny village in Brushcreek Township, Highland County, Ohio. It provided familiar surroundings since it

was a fruit growing region. He had migrated like hordes of his country men, to attempt to escape the Great Famine. In 1847 Ireland had become a country of starving and homeless paupers. They had no desire to migrate to Liverpool or anywhere else in England. America was the land of opportunity and it did not matter if it meant begging for the fare or selling their labor to someone in the United States. Many Irish were brought to Ohio

Clyde Beatty on the Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus around 1924. Pfening Archives.

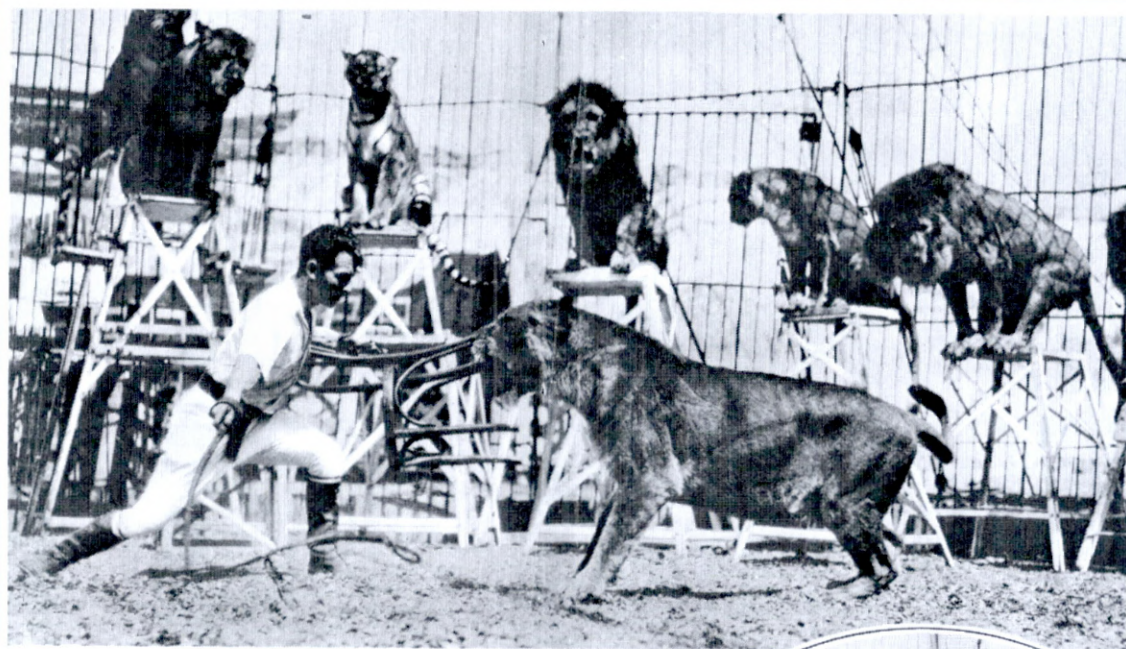


to pay off their passage by digging canals and building the railroads and roadways for pitifully low pay. The canal system came to be known as the "Irish graveyard" since every mile of canal accounted for another dead Irishman. The Irish also built the railroad, but in Ohio, at least, they persevered and gained the chance to crew them once they were complete. The trip to America, by all descriptions, was a horrible experience with insufficient and bad food, filthy beds and extreme overcrowding. The disease ridden journey seemed endless to simple peasants with no idea of distance and time.

In the almost exclusively Protestant area where the Beattys settled, rampant prejudice against the Irish existed. In the 1850s in Chillicothe, the anti-immigrant and anti-Catholic sentiment led to vandalization of Catholic schools. The lack of churches and schools often caused these rural, isolated Catholics to abandon their faith by the second generation, as was the case with the Beattys.¹ The Womens Christian Temperance movement also originated in the region, in Hillsboro, Highland County. As was true with the Beattys, the only marriage solution was typically to a German spouse. Samuel followed this course, marrying Lavina Spurgeon, a Missouri native in 1873. His children, in turn, married Everharts and Kniselys. By 1900 the Beattys had 16 children, 9 of whom were living.

The family structure had changed drastically by 1910. Samuel was gone and Lavina had moved into Bainbridge on Jester Hill Road where she took in washing. One wonders, if like Sherwood Anderson's family, they feared the onset of fall, with its scarcity of farm work and the need for wood and coal. His mother also was a washerwoman for the more prosperous families and the winter proved bitterly hard. Anderson remembered her blue cold hands and her skirts frozen so stiff she could take them off and stand them beside the kitchen stove.²

Lavina Beatty's 32-year-old son, John, had tuberculosis but still worked as a farm laborer in the surrounding orchards and her thirteen year old son, Charles, also lived at home. Her 16 year old brother, Frank, was boarded out with the Kniselys, and most



of her sisters were married. (Three of the brothers and sisters had married Everharts). That is with the exception of 27 year old Margaret who shared a rental apartment on Third Street with her brother George, 22, who worked at a coal dock in town. Margaret Beatty already had three children; six-year old Clyde, [Beatty's 4th grade record gives his birthdate as July 10, 1903] Georgia, five; Ruth, two; and was expecting a fourth. Like Anderson, speculating about his childhood, young Clyde must have been mystified how so many could live in so small a house as more children kept coming.³

Bainbridge is located in Paxton Township in the southwest corner of Ross County on the south bank of Paint Creek. It is in the heart of the extremely fertile Paint Valley. Back from the Valley the land rises gradually as an ocean wave into a lofty range of immense hills. Most of these hills are well adapted to fruit growing. The area had originally been part of the Virginia Military Lands, and the early settlers had been Virginians who migrated directly from that state or by way of Kentucky. They took up grants due them as Revolutionary War veterans and became middle-western farmers.

Life in a small rural town like Bainbridge undoubtedly was not easy for Margaret or her small children. No remedial or social agencies existed in those regions. Poor children faced the prospect of more poverty and the physical and mental deterioration that came from grinding farm labor. Among isolated Irish families, a high degree of illegitimacy frequently existed at the turn of the century. Lacking the cultural and famil-

Clyde Beatty with thirty-two lions and tigers in 1928 at the Peru, Indiana winter quarters of the American Circus Corporation. Pfening Archives.

ial support found in Ireland, where the illegitimacy rate was the lowest in Europe, the Irish-American often faced the same discrimination and lack of work found among black Americans today.

Men were forced to look for jobs where ever they could get them, often abandoned wives and girl friends. Young women bound out to farmers or serving as maids were frequently fair game for the male members of the family, who always placed the blame on the loose morals of the Irish peasant girls. Thus birth out of wedlock in these areas came to be condemned as minor offense, especially if the woman, like Maggie Beatty, was self-supporting. There was little effort at concealment and many of the women had from two to six illegitimate children.⁴

When George married, Maggie was forced to support her growing family and she too, began to take in washing. Anderson expressed his feelings by writing: "Mother began her career as a wash woman for I remember sharply a kind of shame that began to grow in the breasts of us children when we were sent to bring home baskets of dirty clothes or to return those washed or ironed.

"We did not go on, these trips, through the streets but kept, as far as possible, to alleyways, and it may well have been that the feeling of shame in us that our mother should be brought down to so low a position in the town's life was by remarks made by other children

of the street. The shame may have come at first into the minds of the two older children . . . and may have been transmitted to the younger ones. . . . We had begun asking ourselves the unanswerable question, 'Why is it that this one is born into life in a big house, with a carriage at the door, with no thought of where food came from. . . . Why does our mother have to wash the dirty clothes soiled by other people.'

"It was not, I am sure hatred of the others that was growing in us. It was not envy. It was a kind of shame. . . ."⁵

People in Bainbridge remember the Beatty children as being very clean and neat, Clyde especially, was called a "lively well-liked youngster." Always small for his age, Buster, as he was nicknamed, kept rabbits and guinea pigs and reportedly once trained a chicken and a raccoon. He sold the latter to a passing circus after it bit him. Trying to attract attention, he would stand on his head for pennies in the Schraders' general store, after they spread paper to keep him from getting dirty. Beatty's best friend, Howard Smith, later the town mortician, remembered the two of them selling peanuts at the Pastime Theater.⁶

The next years saw more additions to the Beatty clan. Clyde's sister, Mabel, was born in 1911, a sister, Lillie, in 1913, and a brother, Clifford, in 1916. His aunts and uncles produced a plentitude of cousins. Uncle Frank, for example, at the time of his death in 1968 had 41 grandchildren and 15 great grandchildren.

A remarkable change occurred in the region with the advent of World War II. Chillicothe became the site of Camp Sherman, an enormous training ground for American inductees. Virtually overnight, the old state capitol became an army town, with an influx of men from all over the country. Men and boys from Bainbridge were volunteering, and a sense of excitement and foreboding filled the air.

However the Camp became plagued with epidemics; first bronchitis and then the Spanish flu. By October 1918, 5,686 cases had been reported which resulted in 1,177 deaths. Chillicothe's Majestic Theater became a temporary morgue where bodies were stacked like cord-

wood. The Army hauled the bodies to the railroad depot by the wagon load, playing funeral dirges as they marched. When they returned from the depot, the band struck up "Dixie" or "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" to help lighten the mood. The city itself had suffered an epidemic but it was relatively mild, but during its course the camp and city were quarantined and all public meeting places, theaters, and bars, ordered closed.

The spirit of the people seemed broken until November 11 when the Armistice was signed and the cheers of the towns inhabitants rang out.⁷

Death not only haunted Chillicothe, but a series of tragic occurrences hit the teen-age Beatty's family, that could not help but mark him severely. Sometimes the guilt of surviving causes a person to prove over and over again that he cannot die. It started in 1917 when his Uncle Frank's son died shortly after birth. Then his Uncle John died from tuberculosis in January of 1918. Six months later his grandmother died of rectal cancer. Charles, now alone, enlisted in the Army and was sent to nearby Camp Sherman. Still a poor fruit picker at heart, he would go AWOL when the crops were ripe. He was always easily apprehended in Fruitdale, usually up a tree picking apples with his army cap on or walking along the road carrying a bushel basket. The war, very unpopular to many, had led to a high number of genuine desertions, along with a large number of misdeeds by ignorant farm boys like Charles. The latter, of course, were more easily caught or just turned themselves in, so they were used as examples.

Charles was eventually sentenced to hard labor at Leavenworth, saying nothing in his own defense at his court martial, and despite the well-documented brutal treatment, which included chain gangs and tying prisoners, spread-eagle to cell doors, he managed to escape and return to Bainbridge, where he was seized again and returned to Leavenworth until 1923.

But the deaths had not stopped yet, and in the spring of 1919, Uncle George's infant twins died. Fall is an especially beautiful time of year in Bainbridge when the leaves explode in a riot of colors on the surrounding hills, but tragedy struck again a lot closer.

CARL HAGENBECK-WALLACE CIRCUS
GRAND RIVER & MYERS ROAD
DETROIT
AFTERNOON & NIGHT
MONDAY MAY

28



Beatty in front of a sixteen sheet lithograph of him in Detroit, Michigan in 1928. Pfening Archives.

Clyde's four-year old brother and fifteen-year-old sister were stricken with diphtheria. At nine in the morning of October 25, 1920, Clifford died, and at one the following afternoon, Georgia died. Like their grandmother they were buried in unmarked graves.

Again we can refer to Sherwood Anderson and wonder if: "Like all boys he thought much and often of death. In the night he sometimes awakened cold with fear, thinking that death must be just without the door of his room waiting for him. When in the winter he had a cold and coughed, he trembled at the thought of tuberculosis."⁸

During these tragedies, Maggie was pregnant again and in March 1921 had another girl, Geneva. This child was attributed to James Tong, whom Maggie married in the spring of 1922. The Tongs had been among the first settlers of Southern Ohio and subsequently some of their heirs in the mid-and late 19th century, owned considerable land in the area. James, however, was listed as a railroad worker, clerk, and handyman. One of the earliest Tongs was a wolfs hunter, and Thomas Tong, a horse thief, was the first prisoner in the new jail in Hillsborough in 1808 with its iron door weighing five-hundred pounds. Tong cut out of his handcuffs, and sawed his way out on the second night, but he was caught, rejailed, and guarded by fourteen armed men.⁹

The restless, ambitious young

Beatty possessed a wild streak that led him to being accused of fathering Mary Butler's child. Although she eventually married a man named Nichols, she hounded Clyde the rest of his life. In 1926, when the circus played Ross County she hauled him into court for non-support. The Bainbridge mayor ordered Beatty to pay two dollars a week support for the four year old boy.¹⁰

Anderson, too, faced this problem. At fourteen he had already heard many stories of boys and young men caught by girls and women. Suddenly there was a child expected. That was it. It all began out of a kind of blind eagerness you could not control. You were with a girl and it happened. And, then before you realized what you were in for, you were caught, forced into marriage. On a certain street of the town, near the street where I lived . . . there was a family of girls. There were six girls in that family and three of them got men that way. It was a risk, it was something terrible."¹¹

But for Beatty there was an escape.

A dramatic photo of Clyde Beatty in the big cage in 1931. Pfening Archives.



A train track ran through the heart of Bainbridge. Helen Santmyer has described a train whistle as the "voice of longing in childhood." Even trips on the interurban allowed "the imagination to march faster than any train . . . that those twenty minutes could cover several lifetimes (up to age twenty-five) each different, although fame was gloriously achieved in each."¹² The train, she continued, also exerted a pull that you knew you would follow, "Unconsciously confident that when you do those who stay at home, and home itself, will never change, will always be awaiting your return." Today no child's imagination can be as stirred as it once was by the "last faint sound of a steam engine's whistle dying away around the curve of the world."¹³

Anderson reminisced further: "One night when he had been late on the road, loitering by fences, hearing the lonely barking of dogs at distant farm houses, getting the smell of the new-ploughed ground into his nostrils, he came into town and sat down on a low iron fence that ran along the platform of the railroad station, to wait for the midnight train north. Trains had taken on a new meaning to him since any day might see him on such a train, bound into his new life."¹⁴

Thus when the siren song of the circus came again in August of 1921, it was not surprising that young Beatty answered it. He had been beating rugs for pocketmoney the morning he left—a career in sports seemed far off—and the circus was here and now and meant an escape



Clyde Beatty in 1960 on the Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros. Circus. Don Smith photo.

from an uncertain future and the tragedies of the past three years.

For many country boys the provocative lure of the circus had quickly become grim reality and they hastily beat a rapid retreat home, but for Clyde Beatty it was just what he wanted. He wrote in his usual fine penmanship to his favorite cousin "Cibby" Penwell about the beautiful countryside in North Carolina and what a good time he was having. In an-

other letter to Cibby from Lancaster, Missouri, he talked of a lion who had been poisoned and died, how he got two of the claws as souvenirs and sent along a lock of the mane to his cousin. The lion, he wrote, had killed three men and conquered many more. He signed all of these "Buster."

The adventure of a lifetime had begun.

FOOTNOTES

1. Albert Hamilton, *The Catholic Journey Through Ohio*, Catholic Conference of Ohio, 1976.
 2. Ray Lewis White (editor), *Sherwood Anderson's Memoirs—A Critical Edition*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1969), p. 28.
 3. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
 4. Paul L. Benjamin, "Illegitimacy in a Rural Community," *The Survey*, June 4, 1921, p. 305.
 5. White, p. 44.
 6. Don Matthews, "Beatty's Boyhood Pals Say He was Destined for His Work," *Columbus Dispatch*, July 1965.
 7. G. Richard Peck, "The Rise and Fall of Camp Sherman—Ohio's World War One Soldier Factory," 1972 (booklet).
 8. Sherwood Anderson, *Windy McPherson's Son*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1965), p. 29. (First published in 1916)
 9. *History of Ross and Highland Counties, Ohio*, p. 361.
 10. *Scioto Gazette*, 3 May 1926.
 11. White, p. 94.
 12. Helen Hooven Santmyer, *Ohio Town*, (Columbus: Ohio State University Press), p. 244.
 13. *Ibid.*, p. 251.
 14. Anderson, p. 99.
- Other Sources:
- Terry Coleman, *Going To America*, (New York: Pantheon Books,) 1972.
- National Archives
Ohio Census Data
Ohio Bureau of Vital Statistics
Ross and Highland County Vital Statistics
Ross County Public Library
Ohio University, Archives and Special Collections
Tacy Arledge, professional genealogist (New Holland, Ohio)
Dr. Seamus Metress, Professor of Anthropology, The University of Toledo (a noted expert on the Irish)

C I R C U S R E P O R T

Published every week by Don Marcks, 525 Oak St., El Cerrito, CA. 05530-3699. Subscription rates per year: United States delivery \$30; Canada and Mexico \$40; overseas surface mail \$45; airmail \$85.

ONLY BIG SHOW COMING

Chapter 8 Part One

Several, Singular, Separate Shows, Solidified

By Orin C. King

1886

"W. Crawley, boss canvasman of Hunter's show, got on a big drunk Saturday [April 10], and while in that condition, without any provocation, shot and seriously wounded Chas. Ballard, a colored man, also an employe of the Hunters. Dr. Gilbert was called and extracted the bullet from the left hip. Crawley made his escape to Missouri (5 miles). The wounded man is doing well and will soon be able to be around."

The above paragraph from the *Pittsburg Smelter* of April 17, is all of the news of Hunter's two shows for the entire season of 1886. The absence of the Hunter name from the Kansas press does not prove that the brothers were not operating in Kansas in 1886, for quite possibly their shows went forth under different titles, as they did two years later when the name was changed to Washington Brothers.

Drunkenness in prohibition Kansas was ironically prevalent. Every issue of every newspaper contained the names of several men arrested for drunkenness, and now and then—worse shame—the name of a drunken woman. Circus day was frequently cursed by drunken trouble makers and the lists of those arrested was frequently longer than usual, and if no arrests were made the absence of drunks was worthy of the editors astonished comments. In the early days drunken Indians were common on show day. On one occasion, the date of which the author failed to record, Topeka police laid out the drunken red men in the shade of a cottonwood tree, and rather than struggle with the impossible names of the sleeping braves, gave each one a number.

Col. Spicer's World's Fair and Congress of Living Wonders opened the

Copyright 1988 Orin Copple King

season of 1886 by playing four days in Topeka at two locations. Nothing is known of Col. Spicer except that he had been on the road for a number of years, and had spent the winter of 1885-6 in North Topeka "reorganizing" his show. "Reorganizing" in circus parlance can usually be translated as rescuing the show from the clutches of creditors. Whether this applies to Col. Spicer is not known.

Wednesday and Thursday, April 21 and 22, found the tents erected on a lot on East Fifth street near the Santa Fe depot. The *Topeka State Journal* reviewed the performance on page one, April 22.

The performance featured a "number of tumblers, some of them very graceful." A contortionist twisted his body into "almost inconceivable shapes." The trapeze performers "excited considerable applause." The De Castro brothers, Brazilians, were outstanding on the horizontal bar. The eldest was described as a "model of fine physical development and his prowess upon the horizontal bar is not to be disputed. His movements are the perfection of power combined with a very

Col. Spicer's World's Fair and Circus placed this ad in the May 22 issue of the *Smith Centre Bazaar*. Kansas Historical Society.

DON'T FAIL TO SEE IT! KEEP AN
EYE ON DAY AND DATE.

COMING!

COL. SPICER'S WORLD'S FAIR AND
CIRCUS UNDER THEIR

MAMMOTH TENTS. TWO IMMENSE
PAVILLIONS!

SMITH CENTRE, WED. MAY 26th.

material grace." The band consisted of a father and his daughters.

"Another feature of the show," the *Journal* continued, "was a number of trained canaries, which did a variety of tricks remarkable in so small a feathered animal, among which was the firing of a cannon, the marching in line at the command, and performances of various other tricks."

Friday and Saturday, April 23 and 24, the show exhibited in North Topeka on a lot near the Union Pacific depot.

There was one unique aspect to Spicer's exhibitions in Topeka. The show played under the auspices of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), and is the first known instance in Topeka of a show having a sponsor. Crowds were reported as good all four days.

Where Spicer exhibited upon leaving Topeka is unknown, but sometime during the week of May 13, the show exhibited in Belleville. The *Belleville Telescope* reported that, "The attendance afternoon and evening was small. They have one or two very fair actors. Taken as a whole, it was as good as we expected to see, and unlike many large shows, they were not followed by sharpers and pickpockets."

The *Downs Chief* took a dim view of the exhibitions in that town, Saturday, May 22. No advance publicity or advertisements appeared in the *Chief*, a fact which may have influenced the editor to publish the following review: "Col. Spicer's World's Fair," squatted in this city last Saturday. In the forenoon their crack band, composed of three or four women paraded the streets in an old worn out band wagon. In the afternoon and evening they performed to a well filled tent of disgusted people. There were three or four very good performers in the outfit, while the rest were tiresome and uninteresting. We are pleased to state that the mayor would not allow any street gamblers to get in their work on the innocent public."

Portis in 1886 had no newspaper, but it was only five miles away from Harlan and the *Harlan Advocate* took care of all the news that came out of Portis. The *Advocate* reported that Spicer was billed to show in Portis on May 24, and never again mentioned the Colonel.

On May 26, exhibitions were given in Smith Centre. The *Bazaar*, Smith Centre, May 22, carried an advertisement for the show which is quoted below in its entirety:

"DON'T FAIL TO SEE IT! KEEP AN
EYE ON DAY AND DATE COMING!
COL. SPICER'S WORLD'S FAIR
AND CIRCUS UNDER THEIR
MAMMOTH TENTS.

TWO IMMENSE PAVILLIONS!
SMITH CENTRE, WED. MAY 26TH."

In the news columns, Spicer ran several small advertisements.

"J. H. Carle with his troupe of trained dogs among which is the world renowned 'Dog Richard' whose performance excites wonder and admiration, Smith Centre, May 26--Wednesday."

Another name cited in the *Bazoo* was that of Frankie Barry, daughter of J. M. Barry who for many years operated circuses out of Topeka and Carbondale using the title of Great American Circus. Frankie, "queen of the high wire," provided a free show by ascending a wire from the ground to the "highest dome of the canvas."

Farther down the column was the announcement that, "Miss Lillie Driesbach's famous Silver Cornet Band composed of 8 beautiful ladies direct from the Empire musical institute of Berlin. The entire performance will be enlivened by this superb Silver and Reed band and orchestra, Smith Centre, May 26."

The *Bazoo* reported it as, "A pretty good show, thank you."

The absence of gambling in Belleville was noted and approved by the *Telescope*, but the story was different in Smith Centre. The editor of the *Bazoo* reported that, "I do not believe in giving two-bits to see a thing when I can see a better thing outside the pavillion. The show on the outside was immense; the principal actors were the sharpers and the suckers. Although the sharpers were largely in the minority they--like the bed bug--got there just the same. It was quite amusing to the lookers on to witness the suckers bite at the bated hook and get caught like the experienced fisherman yanking out a mud-cat from the brook. Sometimes, during the game, the boys would win a dollar a two, and then it was 'quite proper' that the gambling should proceed unmolested. But the moment the 'filthy' commenced going to the gambler, just that moment a kick was perceivable all along the line. I have no sympathy for the men who bucked the tiger and lost. The gamblers came here for the purpose of winning their money and they did it. The boys went and bucked the game with the intention of winning and lost!! which, had they the least bit of gumption, would

have known that such would be the case. Again the old saying, 'a fool and his money soon part,' was amply verified in this case. I do not wish to uphold gambling in any form, but I believe it would be right to license every gambling shark that comes along until our Smart Alecks get their eye teeth butchered up so badly by experience that in time will result beneficially to their welfare."

The First Circus and Menagerie Ever in Finney County.

HALL'S CONSOLIDATED RAILROAD SHOWS

Circus, Museum and Menagerie.

ATTRACTIIONS

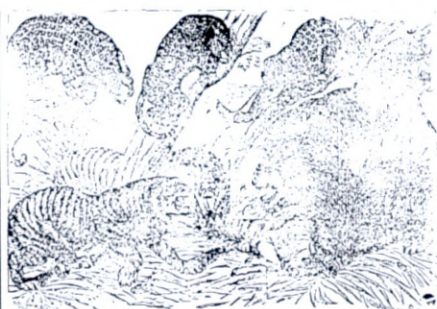
MORE NOVEL AND STARTLING
THAN EVER BEFORE PRODUCED
IN A SINGLE EXHIBITION AND
YET THE PRICES HAVE NOT
BEEN INCREASED. NO ONE WILL
BE AUGMENTED.

The Lion Slayer

Most vicious of all animals on earth.

EL MAHDI

The great War Elephant.



NEW FEATURES

EMBODYING MORE WONDERFUL
THAN ALL OTHER SHOWS IN
AMERICA COMBINED. THE
MOST COMPLETE AND
EXCITING EVER
DEVELOPED.

SACRED COW

Ever exhibited in America.

VAMPIRE

The South American Blood Sucking Animal.

TWO EXHIBITIONS DAILY AFTERNOON AND NIGHT 2:00 and 8:00 P. M.

WILL POSITIVELY APPEAR RAIN OR SHINE ON THE DAY AND DATE ADVERTISED
GARDEN CITY, THURSDAY
GEO. W. DE HAVEN,
Lessee and Manager.

MAY 6.

Col. Hall's show used this ad in Garden City, Kansas on April 14. The newspaper typesetter had difficulty finding all of the letters for the title. Kansas Historical Society.

The *Bazoo* made one comment which has the absolute ring of truth. "It is a snide town that can't have a circus."

The exhibitions at Logan, on June 5, elicited favorable comment from the *Phillips County Freeman*: "Col. Spicer's World's Fair exhibited in Logan last Saturday in the afternoon and evening and was attended by large crowds. The show is well worth the money. Every part of the business is conducted in an orderly and business-like manner. Their band is considered by musicians to be first-class. Three of four of the musicians being ladies make quite an attraction to circusgoers. The athletes are superior to many of those found with large circuses."

Several of the beautiful ladies from the Empire musical institute of Berlin appear to be missing from the above account. Also missing are the grifters who operated in Smith Centre, but this can be explained by the fact that the Logan city government refused to license any soap or jewelry sales, or gambling.

Col. G. W. Hall's Consolidated Railroad Shows under the management of George W. DeHaven appeared in several Kansas towns in 1886, including the following: May 6, Garden City; May 10, Dodge City; May 11, Spearville; May 12, Kinsley; May 13, Larned; May 17, Ellinwood; May 18, Nickerson; June 7, New Kiowa; June 8, Attica; June 9, Medicine Lodge; June 16, Humboldt; June 17, Iola; June 18, Colony; June 19, Garnett.

DeHaven was no stranger to Kansas, having played several towns in 1873 when he was a partner in the notorious Great Chicago Show, Museum, Menagerie and Best Circus in the World, an aggregation best known for "games of chance" in which all the chances belonged to the show and the rubes had no chance at all.

A half page ad appeared at the top of page 5 of the Garden City *Sentinel*, announcing "The First Circus and Menagerie Ever in Finney County."

The show contained "More Novel and Startling ATTRACTIIONS than ever before produced in a single exhibition, and yet the prices have not been nor will they be augmented." Among the unparalleled attractions at no increase in prices, were "El Mahdi, the great War Elephant and The Lion Slayer, Most vicious of all animals on earth." The Slayer was never identified.

The show was "Embodying More Wonderful NEW FEATURES than all other shows in America combined. The most complete menagerie now traveling." Included in the menagerie was "the only VAMPIRE THE SOUTH AMERICAN BLOOD SUCKING ANIMAL," but even more exciting than the VAMPIRE was "the only genuine SACRED COW Ever exhibited on the American Continent."

Exhibitions were scheduled at 2:00 and 8:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 6, but the presence of the show was not confirmed by the Garden City papers. Prior to show day the *Sentinel* ran the following hand-out:

"The Circus.

"Col. Hall's big United States and Great Eastern Consolidated Shows and Mammoth Menagerie, Museum and Aquarium, will pitch its tent in Garden City next Thursday. With this great circus will be found the most accomplished and daring riders, tumblers, vaulters, contortionists

and trapeze performers, the funniest clowns and jesters, the finest horses and the most gorgeous paraphernalia. In the menagerie will be seen El Mahdi, the great war elephant. Romeo, the smallest dwarf elephant in the world, the baby camel, the Lion Slayer, the most vicious animal on earth, camels, vampires, and beasts and birds of every description too numerous to mention. The grand street parade and high wire ascension will be worth coming miles to see."

The Dodge City *Democrat* acknowledged the exhibitions of May 10, with the simple report on the 15th that, "Col. Hall's circus gave an exhibition at this place last Monday. The show was a very small affair but what there was of it was very good. They had good audiences both performances."

DeHaven brought his show to Spearville on May 11, making it the first circus ever to play the town. "The great street parade of Hall's big circus will well repay you to come to see. Remember the date--May 11th." The parade announcement and one small generally vague handout comprised the total advertising for the Spearville date.

After the show had come and gone, the Spearville *Blade* reported, surely with tongue in cheek, that, "Spearville has had its first introduction to the tented arena, which occurred last Tuesday, on the event of Col. Hall's mammoth circus and menagerie, consisting of acrobat, gymnastics, trapeze, grand and lofty tumbling; fierce and gentle animals captured on the desert plains and dense jungles of Asia, Africa and America."

In another column the *Blade* noted that, "Several of the boys were taken in several dollars worth on the soap trick during the circus."

The Larned *Eagle-Optic* announced the coming on May 13 of Hall's great railroad show with the following: "Come to town early next Thursday and see the grand street parade. It will not cost anything, and by getting an early start you will stand a better chance to borrow half a dollar to go to the show."

The *Eagle-Optic* had no comment regarding show day.

The Larned *Chronoscope* reported that, "The circus pitched its tent in this city last week according to announcement. It was a very poor affair, and had it not been for the people who came in from the country they would not have made their board here."

The *Chronoscope* gave more space to the church women who operated a restaurant on circus day: "The supper given by the ladies of the Baptist church last Thursday evening at the rink hall proved to be a very successful affair. The supper consist-



George W. DeHaven, operator of the Col. Hall show in 1886. Al Conover collection.

ed of all kinds of good things, most too numerous to mention, and was relished by those who partook of it. Ice cream and strawberries were also served in the best style and up to a late hour at night the young folks lingered around the tables and enjoyed themselves in gossip. So far as we could learn the supper was gotten up under the management of Mesdames Boles, Lanman, Williamson, Howard, Houston, Miles, Nicholl, Cook and Blunt, Misses Mary Boles, Lena Wayland, Melia Boles, May Holmes and others whose names we were unable to learn and who deserve as much praise as those we have mentioned. Miss May Holmes had charge of the cream and flowers being ably assisted by some of her little pupils who did justice to themselves and to their teacher. We cannot file as full report of this supper as we would like to do, but will say however, that the ladies all worked hard and in return for their labors added \$158 to their treasury as receipt of the occasion. They also furnished an excellent dinner."

The Ellonwood *Express*, April 22, reported that, "The Hall circus billing car, in charge of D. N. Hitchcock, was in the village Tuesday [April 20]. As a result the town is ablaze with show bills."

One paragraph in the *Express*, April 29, announced the coming exhibitions in Ellinwood: "Col. Hall's Big United States and Great Eastern Consolidated Railroad Shows, 2-ring Circus, Mammoth Menagerie, Museum and Aquarium will be here on Monday, May 17th. The big street parade will be worth coming a long distance to see."

After the show had come and gone, the *Express* reported that, "There was quite a

crowd at the evening performance of the circus, Monday. Upon the whole, though, the show amounted to but very little."

The advertising car upon leaving Ellinwood moved on to Nickerson to inform the world that show day would be Tuesday, May 18.

The Nickerson *Argosy*, April 22, stated that "The Hall Circus Co. are having their bill-paster (sic) car painted and remodeled at this place."

The renovating of the car took considerable time and it was not until May 6 that the *Argosy* reported the car out of the shops and commented that it "looks like a daisy."

Hitchcock apparently spent the entire time in Nickerson and the *Argosy* found him to be "one of the most courteous and obliging showmen we have ever met."

The editor was incensed by the way the circus was being gouged by the townspeople and published a warning to the guilty: "The circus will be here on May 18th. It is doubtful if we will ever have the privilege of seeing another in the town. As a rule circus agents are liberal with their tickets, but some citizens have been greedy and for the smallest piece of work done have asked for an outrageously large number of tickets, which will have its effect on other concerns having a desire to exhibit in this town."

Collecting overdue subscription money was a common problem for all small weekly newspapers, and the *Argosy* expressed the opinion and the hope that, "Nickerson will boom on the 18th, and the overworked farmer will have a chance to thank God that he is alive and show his gratitude by paying his subscription."

On the 13th the *Argosy* had another reminder for delinquent subscribers: "Nickerson will hardly be able to hold the people who will be here on circus day, next Tuesday. Therefore we offer the use of our large and commodious office to our country subscribers, and will be at home to all subscribers, especially those who come to pay their subscription."

Following the exhibitions the *Argosy* described the show as "a rather small concern, but the performance (was) up to the average." There was no report on the delinquent subscribers.

The Attica *Advocate* reporting on the exhibitions of June 8, stated that, "Col. Hall's circus gave two exhibitions in this city Tuesday. To say that they were first class would not be the truth, but about as good as should be expected in so new a country would come nearer it. The animals were few and the ring performances, what there were of them, were just so-so."

The Medicine Lodge *Cresset* of June 3 carried a large ad for the exhibitions of June 9 announcing "The First Railroad

Show ever in Barber County." Added to the "Completest Menagerie Now Traveling" were "A Drove of Camels from Arabia. Zebras, Lions, Tigers, Hyenas, Jackals, Leopards and Panthers from the Wilds of Africa. Kangaroos from Australia. Romeo the smallest dwarf elephant in the World, Only Three feet High. The only Baby Camel Ever Born or Exhibited in the Country. Giraffes from Asia."

It must have been reassuring to the people of Medicine Lodge to learn that the show "never Splits or Divides its Attractions, but is positively coming in all its vastness and entirety."

DeHaven in advertising presented a magnified view of his show. All shows exaggerated, but DeHaven abused the privilege. The people of Medicine Lodge saw the truth with their own eyes and the *Cresset* passed it along to the world.

"Yesterday was circus day. Hall's immense railroad show, consisting of three cars, was here. They have a fair circus, but the menagerie must be in 'soak' some place."

The *Barber County Index*, Medicine Lodge, ran the following handout purported to be taken from the *Wichita Eagle* of May 27. A search of the *Eagle* failed to turn up the quote.

"Hall's Circus.

"Col. G. W. Hall's circus and menagerie is now drawing large audiences near the Santa Fe freight depot. The menagerie consists of some fine specimens of the animal kingdom, while the performance in the circus is well up to the standard of tent shows; with no three or four ring performances to distract attention, but a single ring where every act stands on its merit. There were many good old-time features that remind us of the show days of which our fathers tell.

"Col. Hall is well and favorably known, as is also his able assistant, Col. G. B. Haven (sic), who entered the show business with Dan Rice, the Cooks, and Castellos, and who had a good circus and menagerie before Barnum went on the road.

"He is one of the few remaining pioneer showmen and has passed through that varied career that fall to their lot.

"The present venture was launched in Chicago four years ago, and after a successful tour through the southern states and the West Indies are returning through Old and New Mexico, Texas and Kansas.

"The large and highly delighted audience that greeted their first exhibitions assure them the same liberal support during their stay for the remainder of the week.--*Wichita Eagle*, May 27.

"This circus will be in Medicine Lodge on Wednesday, June 9th."

In reviewing the show the *Index* report-

HALL'S Two---Rings

Monster Railroad Show.

TRANSPORTED BY ITS OWN SPECIAL
TRAIN.

THREE TIMES LARGER THAN EVER

Monster Menagerie of Wild
ANIMALS
—AND—
MUSEUM.

Romeo, the baby elephant.

El Mahdi, the great War Elephant,
The Lion Slayer,
The Vampire.

Drove of Camels,

Zebras, Lions,

Tigers, Hyenas,

Leopards and Panthers.

Finest collection of circus performers
—NOW—

TRAVELING.

Tumblers, Bare---Back Riders.
Trapeze Performers, etc.

WE WILL HAVE THE
ORIGINAL MERMAID
With which P. T. Barnum made his first money in the show business.

Will show in all its entirety at COLONY
on
Friday, June 18, 1886,
afternoon and night.

For particulars see bills.

This Hall ad used in Colony, Kansas, advertised Romeo the baby elephant. Kansas Historical Society.

ed, "Hall's circus was here Wednesday, and it was a creditable entertainment, far superior to Johnson's circus in every respect. The tumbling, balancing and trapeze work was as good as any circus; the mirth provoking part was slim; the menagerie was small but well selected. So far as has been reported, there were no confidence men or fakires following the show. It is not a big three-ring circus, at all; but gives a performance worth fifty cents in any country."

The Humboldt *Union* had great expectations for the exhibitions of June 16.

"It takes twenty cars to carry Hall's circus and menagerie.

"Undoubtedly Hall's big show will be the best that has visited Humboldt for some time.

"We are of the opinion that those who attend Hall's circus and menagerie at this place on the 16th, will be sure to witness a fine show.

"Hall has been in the show business 41 years and ought to understand it well enough to give a good show."

When Hall's bill posters left town, Kerk Williams of the billiard hall went along.

The realities of show day must have pained, angered and embarrassed the editor for on the 19th after the show had come and gone, the *Union* carried a pair of bitter stories.

"Hall's 'big show' made no parade as advertised, in fact they had no horses or wagons. The performance was fairly good but not one fiftieth what it was advertised. Segrist and Howe's Wild West was far ahead of it. Hall drew a big crowd but will he do so, if he ever comes here again? If some of the larger shows would come to this place and give the people a first-class performance they would draw a large crowd, but the day of snides is past in this section.

"The 'aggregation of colossal magnitude' and 'multitudinous consolidated combination' of humbuggery--'Col.' Hall's 3 cars combined in one grand and wonderful show, arrived in due time. If a town would do right they would require shows to produce what they advertise or 'pull for the shore' of some other place where people are easily victimized. They advertised a 20 car show at this place and only brought three, just a lie of 17 cars, but then that ain't much, is it?"

In conclusion the editor commented, "For this season we have had enough of 'big show.' Trot out your little ones."

For the *Iola* stand on June 17, Hall's Two Ring Railroad Show advertised that it was composed of "4 Different Parts 4.

"Part 1st, Two Ring Circus

"Part 2nd, The Menagerie

"Part 3rd, The Theatre

"Part 4th, The Wild West Show

"One cheap ticket admits to all advertised shows."

In the *Iola* advertising DeHaven augmented the show immensely.

"Twenty-Three Cages of Wild Animals

"40 Male and Female Star Performers

"18 Champion Tumblers

"18 High and Lofty Leapers

"12 Select Horizontal Bar Performers

"The Champion Lady Dramatists of the World

"The Largest Troupe of Trained Dogs on the American Continent.

"THE ONLY GREAT MORAL SHOW THAT TRAVELS."

And, of course, "The only genuine SA-

CRED COW EVER EXHIBITED ON THE AMERICAN CONTINENT."

The *Iola Register*, June 25, after the show had come and gone had some interesting things to say.

"Col. Hill's circus arrived on time last Thursday and pitched its tents according to programme. Owing to 'unforeseen circumstances entirely beyond their control' the promised street parade had to be dispensed with. The fact that they had neither horses nor wagons may also have cut some figure. The lack of a street parade doubtless deterred many people from patronizing the show, but it attracted very good audiences nevertheless. And it was a pretty tolerably bad show after all. There was only one new thing about it--the 'pole act'--which was really fine. All the rest was mildewed with age. The clowns especially were most melancholy creatures. One in particular looked as though he had been raised from the dead--along with his 'gags'--and was determined never to forgive his resurrection."

On June 18, the show played Colony. The *Free Press* reported that, "Hall's show which exhibited here last Friday, didn't draw much of a crowd and wasn't much of a show. The 'animals' were rather scarce and the circus entertainment, with the exception of the tumbling, very thin. Three cars carried the whole outfit."

In June of 1886 there was a small show wandering around eastern Kansas bearing the title of Segrist, Howe & Co.'s New United Shows and Wild West. The show billed Grenola on June 4, Longton on June 5, and Humboldt on June 10. Whence it came and whither it went and the towns, other than the three above, are unknown to the author.

The following handout appeared in the *Grenola Chief* on May 22: "Friday June 4th will be a big day for the people of Grenola and vicinity, that being the time set for the appearance of Segrist, Howe & Co.'s New United Shows and Wild West which will exhibit here, comprising a novel and interesting ring performance, clowns, riders, gymnasts and tumblers in addition with the Great Wild West of Mexicans, cowboys and Indians, under the direction of Capt. Stubbs the champion shot. Street parade at 10 o'clock a.m. Two performances daily; doors open at 1 and 7 o'clock p.m. Admission to the entire shows only 25 cents."

Another show of unknown dimension--Col. Hill's Circus--scheduled Grenola for Saturday, June 12, a coming event that did not escape notice by Segrist-Howe. On June 5 the *Chief* commented that, "The management of the circus which showed here yesterday exhibited a great deal of gall by announcing to the audience that

Col. Hill's circus, which is to appear here next Saturday, could not reach here before the 17th. The circus [Hill's] is in good condition, and from the flattering notices contained in our exchanges, is meeting with

nation concerning the exhibitions of Saturday, June 5. the piece was quite similar to the one used at Grenola and emphasized Capt. E. E. Stubbs and a "host of Mexicans, Cowboys and Indians." Other advertising was buried in the columns of local news and consisted of short sentences.

"Segrist, Howe & Co.'s Big Shows will visit Longton, Saturday, June 5th.

"Be in town Early on June 5th. Big Shows here on that Day.

"Segrist, Howe & Co.'s United Show and Wild West will Exhibit at Longton, Saturday, June 5th. Grand Street Parade at 10 o'clock A.M. Admission only 25 cents for the entire Combined Shows."

The *Times* took it upon itself to warn its readers of the perils of circus day.

"One week from tomorrow will be show day, and no doubt there will be all kinds of gambling institutions in town that day carried on by men who follow it to make money. Now we advise all to give these fellows a wide birth [sic], and let them alone, for no matter how simple their game looks, remember it is hard to beat a man at his own trick. If you do try it and get beat stand it like a man, don't grumble and growl, and swear that these men had ought to be mobbed. You are the suckers that they are looking for; keep clear of them, or forever afterwards hold your peace."

All of the show's advertising and the warning of the *Times* was brought to naught by the weather. The spring of 1886 was unusually wet, the roads were axle deep in mud, rivers were unaffordable and many bridges were washed away, so therefore the following paragraph from June 11 should not have surprised any of its readers.

"The show that was billed to show at this place last Saturday failed to get here until it was too late to show, so they just passed on through, and left our people to spend their money for something that would benefit them."

The title as published in the Humboldt *Union* pursuant to the exhibitions of Thursday, June 10, is the only example carrying the magical designation of "R. R."--Segrist, Howe & Co.'s New United R.

PARADOXICALLY AS IT MAY SEEM, THE
Fourth of July Comes on May 19 This Year!

(NOTE--The Change has been made in account of W. W. Cole's new personal shows exhibiting here on the latter date. Citizens' Committee.)

200 ILLUSTRIOUS CIRCUS STARS--70 DISTINCT ACTS.

No Passive Attractions! Nothing commonplace, cheap or gaudy! No diversity of experience by its Absolute Superior! Every act of the matchless variety is a miracle itself!

THE MOST MATCHLESS PERFORMANCE EVER CONCEIVED BY THE GENIUS OF MAN!

Two Magnificent, Complete Exhibitions, rain or shine, at
FORT SCOTT, WEDNESDAY, MAY 19.

W. W. COLE'S TIDAL WAVE

OF UNPARALLELED AMUSEMENT NOVELTIES!

Monster Circus--Exalted Tumbler--Museum of Living Wonders--Wax Figures--Mexican Exhibit--50 Cents--Mentor--Real Roman Hippodrome--Mr. Carver's Famous Original "Wild West" Ambulation.

More than Enough Attractions to Equip any Four Contemporary Shows.



W. W. COLE'S HIPPODROME
LADY JOCKEYS REAL RACING

Stupendously Reinforced With
DR. W. F. CARVER'S F MOOS, ORIGINAL WILD WEST EXHIBITION.

100--NOTED SCOUTS, COWBOYS, INDIANS and MEXICAN VAQUEROS--100

Sumptuous revival of the REAL ROMAN HIPPODROME. Forty English and Kentucky Thoroughbreds in thrillingly realistic trials of speed. Authentic Hippodrome track. Three times around one mile.

CHAMPION PERFORMERS FROM EVERY NOTED EUROPEAN CIRCUS.

INCLUDING
The \$10,000 Challenge Aerialists, the Great Silbons,
John Worland (Human Meteor) in blood curdling Triple
Somersaults!
James Leon, champion bareback rider of the world!
M'le Delmar, the Peerless French Equestrienne.
"Hero," the Somersault-throwing Dog!

Most imposing collection of wild beasts this side of the Nile. The two-headed cow, white biped, porcupine, Red Sea Rhinoceros, and other wonders.

MIGHTY SAMSON The majestic hero of legends, beloved of the little children. Straw five turban last year. God's masterpiece of wondrous animal creation!

Marvellously trained elephants, Elephantine soldiers, Elephantine musicians, boxers and wrestlers. Run dazzling, spectacular, spectacular street parade, appearing on the public thoroughfare at 10 o'clock every morning.

Admission To the entire Combined Shows **50c.** Children Under Nine Years of Age **25c.**
K. served Cookhouse Opera Chairs at the usual slight advance.

Dr. W. F. Carver was featured in this Cole newspaper ad used in Ft. Scott, Kansas in 1886. Kansas Historical Society.

great success. The circus will be here the 12th."

The *Chief* made no further mention of Segrist, Howe & Co.

The Longton *Times* on May 28 ran a short handout of the Segrist-Howe combi-

R. Shows and Wild West. It is doubtful that Segrist-Howe was anything more than a wagon show. Possible agent Ed L. Brannan sought a bit of glory for Segrist-Howe when he placed the handout with the *Union*, or perhaps the "R. R." was merely a printer's error. In any event, "The Wild West show arrived in due time, and the small boy rejoiced muchly."

The *Union* reported, "A big crowd in town on show day," but apparently the crowd did not attend the exhibitions.

"The Wild West did not draw very heavy on the money of this vicinity, owing to the fact perhaps, that people are not very fond of cowboys and Indians. Some of their performances, however, were good and as it was a change from the other line of shows. Those who attended seemed to enjoy themselves."

Advertising in the *Grenola Chief* for Col. Hill's Circus for exhibitions on June 12, began a week ahead of show day. The first mention was undoubtedly gratuitous, displaying a marked lack of enthusiasm: "Another circus on the 12th."

Some of the brief announcements might have been a bit pretentious:

"Saturday, June the 12th, is the day that the greatest show that has ever visited Kansas will be in Grenola.

"Col. Hill's circus is different from the ordinary shows which have hertofore exhibited, being one great aggregation of novelties never before exhibited. Don't fail to bring wife and little ones to town."

On show day, the 12th, the *Chief* urged its readers to:

"Attend the circus today.

"Remember the circus today.

"Turn out and witness the grand circus parade today.

"Take wife and little ones to the circus today and to-night.

"Don't fail to attend the circus today, for likely it will be the last of the season.

"Our exchanges speak very highly of the circus which exhibits here to-day. Do not fail to see it."

Whether Col. Hill played the date, had good crowds, pleased or fleeced the people will never be known for the *Chief*, after show day, never again mentioned Col. Hill.

As a side show at no additional cost--The name Grenola is a composite name for two side-by-side towns that agreed to merge in 1879, Greenfield and Canola.

William Washington Cole was one of a few fortunate showmen who entered the business at a managerial level and progressed in a comparatively straight line, avoiding the ups and downs of most entrepreneurs, to a position of great wealth, reputedly the first person to earn a million dollars in the circus business. Cole had an excellent circus in 1886 which

ITS SUN NEVER SETS.

The Most Imposing Amusement Event of Contemporaneous Times!

W. W. COLE'S Huge Two Million Dollar Colossal All-Feature SHOWS.

Two Magnificent, Complete Exhibitions at
Topeka, Tuesday, May 25, 1886.

Enlarged for this Tour!!

\$225,000 Expended for Unione Novelties!



Stupendously Reinforced With

DR. W. F. CARVER'S

("Evil Spirit of the Plains.")

FAMOUS—ORIGINAL

"Wild West" Combination,

Including the Noted Young Sioux Chief

"WHITE CLOUD,"

The Foremost Warrior and Rider of his Race,
and 100 Celebrated Scouts, Cowboys, Indians
and Mexican Vaqueros.

BORDER LIFE!

BROUGHT HOME!

Unparalleled Reproduction of the Hippodrome
Sports of Ancient Rome!

This ad for W. W. Cole appeared in the *Topeka Democrat* on May 15, 1886. Kansas Historical Society.

played several dates in Kansas, including, among others: May 15, Wichita; May 18, Girard; May 22, Olathe; May 25, Topeka; October 4, Salina; October 7, Wellington.

In their advertising the press department modestly presented Cole as "The Incomparable Innovator! The Iconoclast of

the Amusement Realm and the Creator of the Newest Forms of Arenic Entertainment Crowned and Sceptered with a Popularity as Wide as the Universe."

"Bigger, Better, Richer and Grandeur than Ever. As Moral as They are Mighty. Stainless as the Stars," Cole's New Colossal Shows played Wichita on May 15.

No where on earth for 50 cents, adults, 25 cents, children under 9, could one find more variety than the following list of features offered by Cole.

"Champion Riders."

New in 1886 was a "Stupendous Revival of the Hippodrome Carnivals of Ancient Greece and Rome." On the largest track under canvas, Cole presented races of every description crowned by "Heroic, Soul Stirring Struggles Between 40 Famous English Thoroughbreds, Unconquered Blue-Grass Flyers."

A Break-down of the expected entertainment was presented in every ad.

"60 Minutes of Circus, with 200 Performers

"30 Minutes of Theatre, with 50 Actors

"30 Minutes of Hippodrome Races, with 40 Riders and Drivers

"30 Minutes of 'Wild West' with Dr. Carver and 100 Indians, Cowboys and Scouts.

"30 Minutes for the Museum, with 1000 Animate and Inanimate Curios

"30 Minutes for the Menagerie, with 500 Varieties of Animals."

Altogether, Cole claimed "3 1/2 Hours of Solid, Unapproachable Entertainment."

The only performer mentioned by name in the advertising was "The Evil Spirit of the Plain," Dr. W. F. Carver, "Champion Shot of the World," who headed the wild west contingent. "He comes no more--Europe Claims Him Next Year!"

Like every other show, Cole had the largest elephant in America, "Samson, the Tallest and Heaviest Elephant This Side of the Orient."

The parade, every day at 10 a.m. was, of course, "10 Times the Most Magnificent Spectacular Street Parade Ever Seen in Any Age or Country."

In all of the advance publicity and advertising for the Wichita date, no mention was made of the lot location. The *Eagle*, May 14, presented the question to its readers together with the answer: "Where is the circus to be held?" is a question that is frequently asked of reporters, but the scribes ain't onto the location. No one need be afraid that he, she or it, can't find the right spot next Saturday. Just follow the elephant and you will get there."

The Girard *Herald*, speaking of the exhibitions of May 18, reported that, "Show day has come and gone, and so has the slang of the canvasman and attaches gone with it, but nevertheless everything

passed off peaceably and quietly which is unusual for circus day."

The *Herald* was not impressed with "The Evil Spirit of the Plains."

"Dr. Carver is without doubt the best shot on this earth, but the fight with the Indians did not show any great amount of skill, on short range shooting."

Olathe, Saturday, May 22, apparently was a circus day satisfactory to all--except the ice man. The *Olathe Mirror-Gazette* reported that, "Owing to a slight 'misunderstanding' between our ice dealers the circus was furnished ice at 5 cents per hundred. During the spirited competition one dealer called the other names which are not allowable, and on complaint being made, was fined by Justice Hammond."

On the 20th the *Mirror-Gazette* warned its readers that although Cole "has always had a good reputation it is more than likely that the usual crowd of harpies will follow them and as a matter of prudence it will be well to see that your houses are securely locked or some one left in charge."

The warning was needless for after the show had come and gone all that the editor had to report was, "Cole's circus averaged better than any similar affair we have witnessed in Kansas. The freedom from camp followers and hard characters was especially noticeable and commendable."

The *Topeka Daily Capital* on May 4 was the first to announce the coming of the great Cole show to Topeka on May 25. On the 4th, C. A. Davis, press agent, paid a visit to the *Capital* office. Part of the agent's popularity can be explained by Cole's liberal advertising program, but Davis was one of the best and was respected by newspaper men all over the country. "There never was a press agent so popular among the newspaper men as Davis," the *Capital* declared, "he knows them all, and is a jolly fellow. He says that Cole's show this year eclipses anything on the road."

Davis placed advertising in all Topeka papers beginning May 5 in the *Kansas Farmer*. The *Commonwealth* carried an ad on May 16 only. The *North Topeka Mail* ran its only ad on the 7th. The *Capital* fared not much better with ads on the 16th and 22d. The *Kansas Democrat* was favored with advertising on May 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 24. The *Journal* was the leader with 14 insertions, running daily from the 8th through the 24th, missing

only Sundays, a day on which the *Journal* did not publish.

The advertising used in Topeka papers was radically different from that used in announcing previous exhibitions. Heavily featured was Carver and his Wild West segment, "Including the Noted Young Sioux Chief 'White Cloud,' The Foremost Warrior and Rider of his Race, and 100 Celebrated Scouts, Cowboys, Indians and



Dr. W. F. Carver, the Nebraska dentist and sharp shooter featured with W. W. Cole in 1886.

Mexican Vaqueros, BORDER LIFE BROUGHT HOME!"

Carver did not get all of the recognition for in the ads he shared billing with 200 anonymous performers; 40 English & Kentucky Thoroughbreds; Samson, God's Most Wondrous Creation; The Great Silbons; and the "Only Living Two-Headed Cow! 2 Heads. 4 Eyes. 4 Horns. 2 Mouths."

Handouts appeared in all Topeka papers, for the most part written in vague generalities, but some spoke of specific people and their acts. There was an "English gentleman," Prof. Watson and his extraordinary canine named "Hero" who could perform such feats "dancing, walking up a rope, imitation of dudes, prize fighters, clowns and policemen, and (sic) THE CLIMAX OF HIS MARVELOUS PERFORMANCES BY TURNING SOM-

ERSAULTS, UNAIDED, ON THE BACK OF A HORSE RUNNING AT FULL SPEED." Watson also presented a group of English greyhounds "who accomplished wonders in the way of leaping over elephants, horses, etc."

Other handouts proclaimed the virtues of Dr. Carver and pointed out that this was the last chance to see the "Evil Spirit of the Plains" since in October he was taking his wild west show to London."

While in Topeka, Carver stayed at Allen Sells' hotel, the Windsor. Ephraim Sells was also at the Windsor visiting his brother.

The Silbons, "the \$10,000 challenge aerialists of the world" were also the subject of a handout.

"Their act is of such a novel and artistic character, and their movements so full of grace, that the most timid of ladies can look upon it without feeling of fear for the daring performers. There are four members of the Silbon family, three brothers, Charles, Walter and Master Eddie, and a sister, Miss Kate. They come from a famous family of English acrobats. The present is their last American season."

Another handout reported on the clowns.

"The list of merry men is headed by the noted English pantomimic and acrobatic clown, the 'Great Ernest,' who will tickle the risibilities of the audiences with his aesthetic donkeys, and ingeniously constructed rubber elephant, 'Goodyear,' Tom McIntyre, the Chesterfield of Shakespearean wits, will amuse in his own quaint, inimitable style; 'Billy' Rollins, one of the brightest jesters that have ever donned cap and bells, will vocalize the latest comic songs, tell rib-tickling stories, and introduce his comic little trained pig, 'Ben Butler.' Ten other high priests of Momus will participate in the revelries."

A handout used repeatedly in Kansas, always with the heading "Cirque de Cole," presented a thought with which every circus fan from the cave dweller to the galaxy searcher of 2090 can agree.

"The circus is universal, all-embracing--a truly regal ruler of all ages, climes and phases of life. After all, perhaps, the clue to the perennial popularity of the circus is here. It touches the spring of immortal youth, and serves as the connecting link between babbling childhood and querulous old age."

The hippodrome, "a third of a mile," was the subject of handout describing a variety of races.

"The program of the races is unusually novel and elaborate, including gentlemen jockey races, two and four horse Roman chariot races, man against a running horse, elephant, camel, pony and donkey contest, wheelbarrow and sack races, and a ladies' steeple-chase. The latter is the

According to the *Commonwealth*, "Mr. A. E. Richards, press agent for Mr. Cole, was found in his quarters just outside the ring tent, where he received his brother pencil shavers yesterday in elegant style. A jovial, whole-souled gentleman, with a mind stored with good common sense, he is just the person to fill the position, and in no small measure aids in winning public favor."

The *Capital* commented that, "Col. A. E. Richards, who occupies a tent near the main entrance, and welcomes his friends in royal fashion, and contributes materially to their pleasure and comfort."

Circuses that played Topeka always had competition from some source, but Cole faced a challenge unequalled by any other show, being the "Dairymaid's Festival" at the Presbyterian church. The idea had filtered into Topeka from the east, particularly Boston, where it had been a smash.

The *Capital* reported that "The entertainment is given in the parlors of the Presbyterian church. A beautiful rural landscape had been placed upon the stage, and with new mown hay, sheaves of wheat, and many other decorations, it only needed a herd of cows to make a very realistic dairy yard. The dairy maids were represented by thirty charming young ladies, who were dressed in dairymaid costume, with short sleeves, big straw hats, each carrying on her arm a bright milk pail, and a beautiful bouquet of wild flowers, roses, or grasses. As the pianist struck up a lively march on the piano, they marched in by twos, counter-marched, and then went through a most interesting drill with military precision lasting several minutes; they marched first in single file, then by twos, by threes, by fours and finally by eights; forming in a semi-circle, they rested for a moment and sang 'We are merry mountain milkmaids.' Then breaking into a series of rhythmic evolutions, they moved in and out, and hither and thither, presenting a strikingly beautiful scene, and one which received the hearty applause of all present. After the first drill Miss Maud Johnson sang a solo and Miss Clara Shelbarger gave a piano solo. Then followed another march by the milkmaids even more perfect than the first."

And more.

In the face of such fierce competition Cole could consider himself lucky to have drawn the crowds that he did.

On show day the thermometer registered 76 at 8 o'clock, 89 at 10 o'clock, and at 4 o'clock, 97. A small ad in the *Journal*

"SELLS BROS are honest, reliable Showmen; their Performances fully equal their Promises."

—Herald, Rochester.

Merit and Magnitude!

HORNELLVILLE, THURSDAY, JULY 8th.

SELLS BROTHERS'



Big United States Circus

—AND NEW—

GREAT EASTERN MENAGERIE.

A Mastadonic Venture, Backed by Energy and Experience.

The organization of this BRAND NEW BIG SHOW has incurred the expenditure of a Princely Fortune. Its projectors are men of money and brains, and they are determined to present to the public an exhibition far surpassing in merit and magnitude any like exhibition ever witnessed in America.

SELLS BROTHERS

have earned the reputation of being honest and fair dealing. What they promise they perform. Their name is a guarantee of goodness. For this year, 1886,

EVERYTHING is NEW!

Sells Brothers used this newspaper ad for their number two show in 1886. It was actually the Barrett equipment with a new title. Pfening Archives.

suggested an antidote for the heat: "If after going to the circus you are tired and warm, go to Pickett's, No. 90 Harrison street and have a bath. Nothing will refresh you more."

A Sunday jump from Denver brought the Cole show back to Kansas for exhibitions at Salina on October 4. In the opinion of the *Salina Republican*, "Cole's circus and menagerie reaped a rich harvest in Salina on Monday. At the afternoon performance there were at least 5,000 in attendance and 3,000 in the evening. The people were generally satisfied with the exhibition of animals and circus performance, and it is generally admitted to be the best show ever seen in Salina."

An accident during the evening show was unreported in the Salina papers, but

the *Daily Postal Card*, Wellington, on October 8, reported that, "Mrs. Watson, one of the daring riders with Cole's circus, met with a serious accident at Salina night before last (sic). she was riding at a rapid rate around the ring when her horse stumbled and fell, dislocating the lady's shoulder and lacerating the tissues of her body. On her arrival in Wellington yesterday morning she was taken to the office of Drs. Brengle and Brenneman, where surgical aid was rendered her."

The show's arrival in Wellington for the exhibition of October 7 was marred by a horrible happening that no surgeon could correct. The *Wellington Daily Press* ran the following:

"A Terrible Accident.

"A boy aged about fifteen years was run over by the show train this morning and his head was entirely severed from his body. From several boys we learned that the boy was a bootblack from Dodge City, who had been in this city for sometime. He was riding on the brake chain under the car and fell with the result stated above. No one has yet been found who can identify him, or who knows his name. He was slender, light hair, blue eyes, freckled face. He wore a pair of blue overalls, blue shirt, black vest, a pair of old plow shoes and a brimless hat. The remains were buried by the county."

On the lighter side the *Press* reported that, "For the first time in the history of show days, a woman sold rubber balloons on the street today. She seemed to take better than the old time tramp from the sunny clime of Italian skies."

The advertising in the fall was the same used in the spring.

The *Sumner County Standard*, Wellington, reported the presence of Will R. Peck, agent, on the Saturday before the exhibitions. "He is a pleasant gentleman and keeps about three days ahead of the show, to see that everything is in good shape for their reception."

The *Standard* commented on a peculiarity of the Cole show concerning the payment of bills.

"The Cole Show is the first one for years that has compelled us to go the show grounds for the settlement of an advertising contract. But as the old way was the way they did business while here of course we went after our money."

One gets the feeling that William Washington Cole was perfectly willing to keep any money that was not called for on the show grounds. If you want paid, come and get it; if not, thank you.

The Dodge City *Democrat*, June 5, car-

ried a report on one of the smallest of the small which played four days in Dodge during the week of May 30.

"Mademoiselle Corinne's show gave four entertainments in our city this week. This show is quite a small affair but the price of admission was small and all who attended seemed satisfied with the performance. They did not claim to have the largest of all traveling shows, but guaranteed satisfaction. The most prominent feature of the show was the slack wire act, by Prof. Nichols. This was pronounced by all to exceed anything they had ever seen in that line."

In September of 1886 an interesting aggregation played, among others, the following Kansas towns under the title of Sells Brothers' Big United States Circus and New Great Eastern Menagerie—a designation, at worst, an out-and-out fraud; at best, an unsavory manipulation of an honored name: September 2, Humboldt; September 4, Anthony; September 6, Wichita; September 8, Eureka; September 9, Garnett; September 13, Mankato; September 15, Logan; September 16, Kirwin; September 17, Osborne; September 18, Stockton.

Nearly everything about this show reflected the operational procedures of the Sells brothers. Like all Sells shows the advertising was on a grand scale and the quality was excellent. Press handouts were typical of the Sells brothers in literary style and interest, being several notches above the usual circus declarations.

The following story taken from the Humboldt *Union* promoting the exhibitions of Thursday, September 2, was used in every town:

"Sells Brothers Circus.

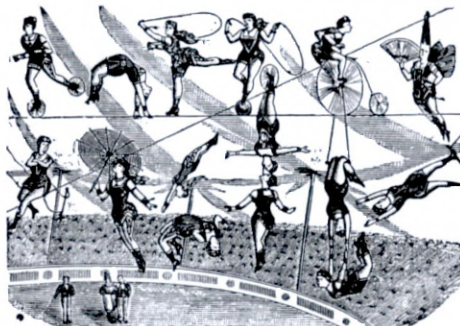
"Readers of the *Union* we think we hear you say murmuringly:—'The harvest is past and the summer is ended, but the circus cometh not.' If such be your plaint, complain no more, for we offer you cheering news. The circus is coming. Mark you, we say the circus and not a circus. When we say the circus we mean Sells Brothers' Big United States Circus and New Great Eastern Menagerie. In a few days the gorgeous posters will decorate the walls and bill boards and its beautiful lithographs illuminate the windows along our streets. They will promise much, but they will promise nothing that will not be revealed to the eye beneath the canvas. It is a circus and a menagerie which you cannot afford to miss if you would spend a day profitably as well as pleasantly, for by it you will be instructed as well as amused. This great show will be in Humboldt, Thursday, September 24. Remember the day; to forget will be to lose a day of pleasure

Itself its Only Parallel!

The people of Jersey county know this is positively the only Big, Great and Grand Show coming this year.

THE BIGGEST. THE GREATEST. THE VERY BEST.

SELLS BRO'S



MAMMOTH 50 CAGE MENAGERIE

AND GREAT

FOUR RING CIRCUS

Drawn by its ponderous locomotives. Its great trains are coming and the big show will exhibit at

Jerseyville, Monday, Sept. 27, 1886,

IN ALL ITS MAGNIFICENT PROPORTIONS.

Sells Bros. Circus used their old mammoth 50 cage menagerie ads on the number two show in 1886. Pfening Archives.

and pleasing memories. On that day let the farm work wait and the plow halt in the furrow. Give yourself, my dear reader, and your wife, and your big and little children and your hired man and your hired girl and your entire household a holiday. Come to Humboldt, all of you, and enjoy yourselves. It will afford you needed recreation, well deserved after a summer of toil and wearing labor. It will renew your youth, restore your good humor, repose your muscles, and reinvigorate you for your fall work. Therefore on Thursday, September 2nd be sure and come to Humboldt, and see Sells Brothers' Big United States Circus and Great Eastern Menagerie."

Another handout used extensively went a long ways in perpetrating the opinion that the coming show was THE Sells Brothers show known to all circus goers as one of the greatest.

"A NEW ENTERPRISE.
BIGGER AND BETTER THAN EVER

HUMBOLDT, SEPTEMBER 2.
A Few Words from Sells Brothers to the People of Kansas.

"During our entire managerial career, now extending over a period of nearly two decades of years, it has been our aim to present to the public the very best tent-ed amusements that money, combined with experience could procure. Year by year we have increased our attractions and added to the merits of our vast exhibitions, until the people have learned to believe in our

HONESTY OF PURPOSE, and have credited us everywhere as being truthful, honest and fairdealing. The great patronage accorded us proves that the people are willing to sustain a Great Amusement Enterprise if properly conducted. With this view we have for the season of 1886, secured many wonderful features and have so augmented our great show that it is to-day celebrated through the entire United States for its superiority and immensity. It is replete with marvelous, rare and costly features. The Circus, Museum and Menagerie form in their entirety an array of marvelous attractions that far exceed in merit and magnitude any

EXHIBITION OF LIKE KIND
IN THE WORLD.

"The enormous expense incurred in gathering in one vast aggregation such a multitude of attractions, would be deemed by most managers a hazardous experiment, but our great faith in the public assures us that our merits to please will be appreciated and that at the end of the season our books will show that we have received a fair interest on the vast amount expended. Elsewhere will appear in the columns of the *UNION* an advertisement which, in connection with our other methods of advertising, will describe in detail the many startling features which can be witnessed in our great show which will appear at Humboldt, Thursday, September 2nd."

When the editor looked at the "400 square yards of show bills on the north side of the Park," he was perhaps justified in thinking, "We will miss our guess if Sells' show does not prove the biggest one that has visited Humboldt in eight years. It will draw a large crowd."

Newspaper advertising pointed out that "SELLS BROTHERS have earned the reputation of being HONEST AND FAIR DEALING."

"Their name is a GUARANTEE OF GOODNESS."

Needless to say, the show had "The Most Celebrated American Artists."

"FACTS AND FIGURES:

1,000 men and Horses enlisted—a full regiment strong.

200 Ring Stars of every clime.
60 Supreme Specialities in notable new novelties.

54 Master Musicians.
16 Eminent Equestrians.
14 Trained Tra Kene Stallions.
12 Lovely Lady Riders.
10 Capering, Comical Clowns.
7 Kinds of Music.
5 Open Dens in Parade.
4 Trains of our own extra-sized cars.
3 Rings full of Champion Actors.
2 Giant Twin Elephants, 'Cotopaxl' and 'Chimborazo.'

1 Bible-recorded, Two-horned Unicorn.
1 Elevated Theatre Stage.
1 All round Pageant Promenade."

All of this was presented in a tent with a claimed capacity of 15,000 people at every performance. It was no wonder that "60,000 People Indorse This Greatest Show."

"The most beautiful sight you ever saw. Gorgeous as the rainbow. A kaleidoscope of beauty and grandeur." This most beautiful sight was the "FREE-FOR-ALL STREET PARADE at 10 in the morning."

The *Union* had a few things to say following the exhibitions.

"Three wheels of fortune, one or two 'soap men,' and various other gambling devices were permitted on our streets last Thursday."

The *Union* paid scant heed to the exhibitions dismissing the entire production with, "The Sells show performance was passably good, but the concert—oh, my! what a sell(s)."

Advance car No. 1 arrived in Eureka on August 25 and proceeded to tell the world that circus day was Wednesday, September 8. In addition to the much used handouts, the press department pointed out that,

"The twenty gold chariots and tableaux cars that form part of the grand free street display belonging to Sells Brothers great show, cost \$110,000, over \$5,000 each. They are said to be marvelously beautiful, and can be witnessed in the grand cortege which will parade our streets on September 8th, that being the day the big show gives its exhibition in Eurka."

Another short paragraph claimed the "only pair of Black Tigers ever in captivity."

When it was all over and out the *Eureka Democratic Messenger* reported that: "The circus Wednesday drew an immense crowd of people to the city the number being estimated at from six to seven thousand. The gentlemen connected with the press department of the show are very courteous, and treated us handsomely in every respect. The circus and menagerie were probably the best which ever came this way, but were hardly up to public ex-

pectation. It is safe to say that Greenwood county is \$5,000 poorer than it was Tuesday, but then some richer, perhaps, in experience."

The *Jewell County Monitor*, Mankato, expressed a feeling of pride that Mankato was selected for exhibitions on September 13, and snobbishly commented, "Sells Bros. circus comes from some point in Missouri to Mankato, passing by Topeka, Lawrence and other small towns on the way, and making their first stop here."

"The circus has come and gone," reported the *Monitor* of September 15, "and left only friends behind. All agree that it was the best show this county has seen for some time. The animals many of them were rare specimens of their kind, both they and their cages showed they had been well cared for. The circus was excellent, the performers showed great skill and activity and all did their parts well. But the features that excited most remark was the utter absence of gamblers and swindlers of any sort and the extreme good behavior of all connected with the show. No profanity, loud talk, or rudeness of any kind was noticed on the grounds. Take it in all the show was the best that has ever visited Mankato."

Circus day may have been all that Mankato desired, but for J. W. Simmons it was decidedly unsatisfactory. While the Simmons family was in town seeing the elephant, some scoundrel raided his orchard and stole a bushel of fine apples that Simmons was saving for the county fair.

The *Phillips County Freeman*, Logan, reported that "The paste brigade of Sells Bros.' Circus, thirteen in number arrived in Logan Tuesday (August 31) and painted the town red. Immense posters covered hundreds of feet of bill boards in a short time." Seven teams were sent into the country to spread the word about the exhibitions of Wednesday, September 15.

"Logan will see the largest crowd that ever assembled in the city. Sells' Circus is among the largest in the United States and ranks with Robinson's, Barnum's, etc."

Show day passed off without any arrests. The *Freeman* reported that, "Several monte men took out licenses to sell various articles of merchandise and then turned it in to monte. The Sheriff advised them to quit and they took his advice."

In another paragraph the *Freeman* presented some interesting information, such as, "Sells Bros. came and were good for points so far west, 22 cars carried their complete outfit, and a large number of wagons took part in the street parade. The main canvas was full to its utmost capacity, making it no doubt a paying investment for the Company. The collection of animals was beyond the expectation of many."

The *Kirwin Independent*, touting the ex-

hibitions of September 16, ran a shameless handout on September 2, relating the birth of Sells Bros.' Big United States Circus and Great Eastern Menagerie.

"The New Show Controlled
By Sells Brothers.

A Great Amusement Enterprise.

"During the past winter a number of capitalists met in New York, and after a consultation, determined to form a stock company to be known as the AMERICAN AMUSEMENT ASSOCIATION.

"After a series of meetings the association was chartered and incorporated under and by the laws of the state, with a paid up capital of \$1,000,000, the amount of shares to be \$1,000, each to be valued at \$1,000. A board of directors were elected, and it was resolved to inaugurate the most extensive and varied tented exhibition ever presented to the public in any portion of the world. The most able amusement managers were engaged with orders to gather a 'Congress of Artists,' regardless of salary, embracing the most famed and celebrated specialists, consisting of equestrians, gymnasts, aerialists, vaulters, tumblers and acrobats from every section of the arenic department. Agents were sent to all parts of the earth to secure for the menagerie a specimen of every rare and curious animal, bird, reptile or amphibious creature known to naturalists. The most experienced advertisers were secured, regardless of cost, a financial manager appointed, and after all details were completed, the 'American Amusement Association' launched for public approval, immediately after the incorporation, their first great venture styled 'The New United States Circus and Great Eastern Menagerie.' Among the largest stockholders were Sells Brothers, the well known circus managers. Sixty cars were ordered and built to transport this colossal show and three advertising cars secured. Each advertising car has twenty men, directed by a competent manager. Advertisers were engaged to bill every line of railway, and mail clerks were secured to address and mail announcements. The entire advertising force consists of ONE HUNDRED ABLE AND EFFICIENT ADVERTISERS, many of whom have occupied prominent positions as advertisers with the best known shows in America. Connected with the circus are two hundred artists, male and female; while of every living thing that abounds in jungles, roams through deserts, crawls the earth, lives in water, or moves through the air, has been secured to make the 'animate natural history department' of the new great venture, the most perfect and complete.

"Sells Brothers were sanguine that this new show would prove a bonanza, and

after careful deliberation they purchased a controlling interest, and hereafter this brand new show will be known as Sells Brothers Big U. S. Circus and Great Eastern Menagerie. This great organization travels exclusively on their own cars, and will visit every city or town accessible by rail. It has fixed its admission at the same price as is and has heretofore been charged by the so-called big shows, and will undoubtedly be a formidable competitor to many of our great show managers."

The Kirwin Chief estimated the matinee crowd at 4,000, including "Thirty people from Smith Center."

Osborne saw the show Friday, September 17, and the *Osborne County News*, September 23, published information of interest.

"The show advertised as Sells Brothers exhibited un this place last Friday to a large crowd. it proved to be the old Barrett show, though owned by Sells Bros., their original show that visited Beloit earlier in the season being now in California. The exhibition given was very ordinary in all respects, the crowning feature being the concert in the evening, when 300 people paid 10 cents each for the privilege of staying to see them tear down the seats.

There was about the usual number of swindlers during the day."

The only comments on the Stockton exhibits of September 18, concerned gambling. The *Western News*, Stockton, had warned its readers to be wary of fakirs, con-men and gamblers, but some readers ignored the warning and therefore contributed "his little 'wad' to make the fakir happy."

"Quite a number of confiding souls were swindled out of their hard earned cash on show day by a meek looking old gentleman who was very desirous of exchanging paper money for gold, but who counted both ends of his bills, giving his victims only half enough money. The same crop of succors (sic) who bit this year will probably be wary next year, but a new crop will be ready to take the bait and the same old story will be told of how good, honest men were victimized."

Mr. Glendenning was one victim who fought back, according to the *News*: "Deputy sheriff A. H. Judd went with Mr. Glendenning to try to overtake Sells Bros. circus in the vain hope of capturing a scoundrel who swindled the latter out of about \$49 in making change at the circus when here. They could not reach them before leaving Hiawatha and gave up the

chase. This should be a warning to all men to leave their money at home when going to a circus, or what is better to stay at home with it. There may be men who are not thieves and robbers traveling in such business but we very seriously doubt it."

It was all so unnecessary. The *News* had warned the people long before the show arrived. If they had only been wary as the paper had instructed them to be, none of the people would have suffered a loss. The life of a newsman was filled with frustration. The people just didn't listen.

When the real Sells Bros. show reached Kansas in November of 1886, it included in its newspaper advertisements at Hutchinson and Augusta, the following disclaimer:

"The Only Genuine SELLS BROS. Circus.

"And most positively no connection with another so called SELLS BROS that visited this portion of the State in Sept. Just returning from a triumphal tour in California, where it has been the entire season."

Research funded by grants from: Wolfe's Camera Shops, Inc., Topeka, Kansas and First National Bank of Kansas, Topeka.

JOIN

THE CIRCUS FANS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Membership includes a
subscription to the bi-monthly
magazine entitled

THE WHITE TOPS

For more information contact:

Dale A. Riker
Secretary-Treasurer
P. O. Box 3187
Flint, MI 48507

WOULD YOU LIKE
TO OWN A CIRCUS?

THE CIRCUS MODEL BUILDERS INTERNATIONAL

SAYS YOU CAN

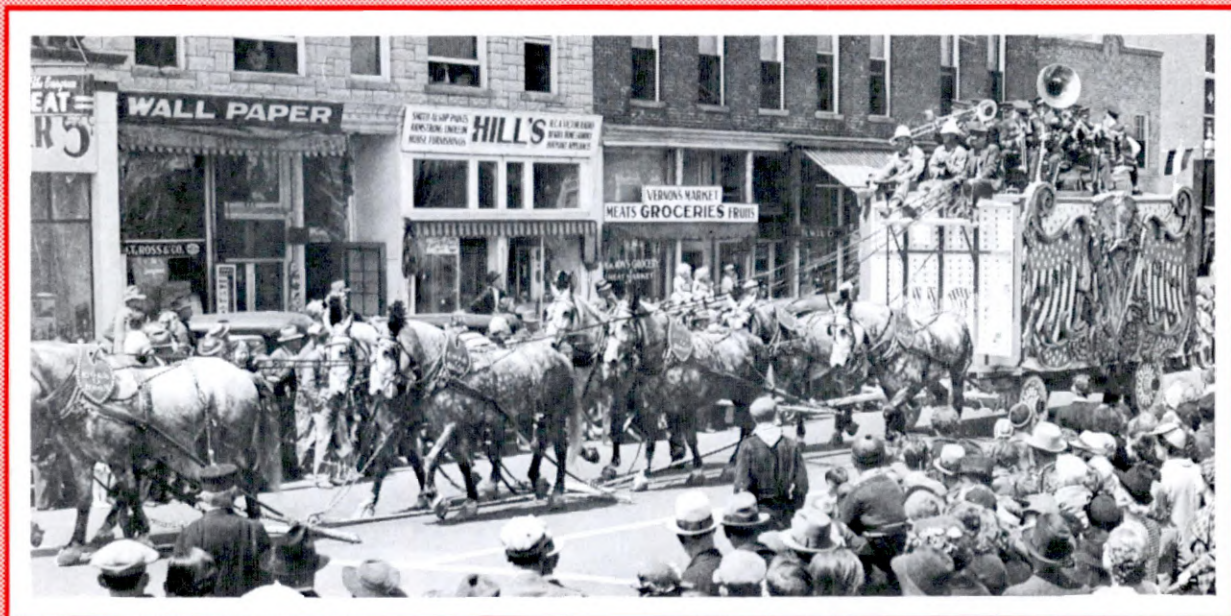
If you love the circus and are a fan
or historian, then you have taken the
first steps to becoming a Circus Model
Builder.

For details contact:

Sally Weitlauf
Secretary-Treasurer
347 Lonsdale Ave.
Dayton, OH 45419

Subscription for the LITTLE CIRCUS WAGON
is \$19.50 per year from above address.

Circus Life and Adventure of Adam Bardy



Adam Bardy's new, revised book now includes 166 pages of interesting reading, as he tells of his life with the circus and of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus tent fire during the summer of 1944, when the big top went up in flames. Adam vividly describes the very start of this devastating fire which took the lives of more than 100 people on a summer day in Hartford, Conn. on July 6, 1944.

Also included in this book is the story of Adam's years of circus life, followed by his life as a bootlegger that started in the Kentucky mountains. Adam describes the State Police raid, when he escaped and spent the next seven years as a fugitive. He tells of his "boxing days" while traveling with the Coleman Bros. carnival in the 1930s, as well as his life with the gypsies, where he learned the art of fortune telling. Many more fascinating experiences of Adam Bardy's life round out this volume.

For those that like to remember the good old days, here is a book full of interesting reading. Adam Bardy's true story of wonderful years gone by.

This nationally advertised book is now for sale at \$12.95 per copy, sent by first class mail. (For overseas orders include \$3.50 extra for air mail postage.)

To order send check or money order to:

ADAM BARDY

87 ALM ROAD
THOMPSON, CT 06277 USA